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When Buckingham Met the Queen.

A Play in 6 Acts and 8 Scenes.

BY

F. S. Hefferman

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E242 1901

PERSONS.

Louis XIII ..... King of France
Anne of Austria ..... His wife
Marie de Medici ..... The Mother of the King
Countess of Lannoi [*an old lady*] lady of honor to the queen
Bellario ..... The equerry to the queen
Madame de Varney ..... Lady-in-waiting to the queen
Dona Estefania, a Spanish lady in confidence of the queen
Duchesse de Chevreuse ..... a lady of the queen's court
Marie de Rohan, the lively and witty favorite of the queen
Henrietta ..... The King's Sister
General Disquemare ..... in love with Henrietta
Dodord ..... The king's chancellor
The Duke of Buckingham ..... in love with the queen
Lord Holland ..... Buckingham's friend
The Earl of Carlisle ..... of the English Embassy
Captain Lennox ..... Captain of the English Guards
The Duke de Chevreuse ..... Proxy for Charles I
Cardinal Richelieu ..... The King's Secretary
Duke de Belrgade ..... a friend of the king
The Earl of Kingston ..... a typical English duke.

Time 1625.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1901, by Frank S. Heffernan, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

Act I.

SCENE I.—*The apartments of Lord Holland. Furniture and costume of seventeenth century. Lord Holland discovered.*

Hol. [*Dressing before a large mirror. His servant fixing and brushing his clothes. Knocking at the door. Indignantly.*] See who is disturbing us. Come!

Enter a liveried servant, R.

Ser. [*Bowing low.*] Captain Lennox desires an interview with your lordship.

Hol. Admit him.

Enter Captain Lennox, R.

Len. Your lordship will pardon me and grant me indulgence for coming at a time when above all other times you are most busy.

Hol. [*Placing the hair brush on the dresser.*] Be seated, Captain Lennox, [*The servant assisting to put on Lord Holland's vest, then his coat.*] What can I do for you, my worthy Captain?

Len. Nothing for me, your lordship. I ask nothing for myself.

Hol. Well, then, why do you call at this particular time, when you have been made aware that the Duke de Chevreuse has asked me to escort the Duchess de Chevreuse to a ball this evening.

Len. It is of the Duke of Buckingham that I wish to speak.

Hol. [*Surprised.*] Buckingham! [*Stopping the adjustment of his collar, turning his head toward Lennox, in a strong voice repeats.*] Buckingham! And a captain of the guards comes when I have not a moment to spare, to talk of his majesty's minister! What unheard of presumption!

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Len. Presumption! Your lordship, kindly do me the justice to bear me indulgence. I am a loyal subject of the crown, and if I can save our country from disgrace and shame, I will do so. What I have to say to you, my lord, must be heard by yourself alone.

Hol Leave us, Bernando, but remain in the adjoining room. I will call you presently.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

We are alone. Speak quickly, for I fear I shall be late. [*Hurriedly adjusting the ruffles of his shirt sleeves.*]

Len. My Lord, I overheard the Duke of Buckingham giving orders which if executed, will disgrace England; if not, cause us to be all killed while here in France.

Hol. How dare you, a Captain, make charges against England's minister? You forget your place.

Len. True, my lord, but this is an exception.

Hol. [*Adjusting his collar, raises his coat to fit his coat to his neck*] If you have anything to relate, do so at once, as I shall be compelled to call my servant to buckle my shoes

Len. Your lordship is not unacquainted with the fact, that the Duke of Buckingham is in love with Anne of Austria.

Hol. [*Surprised.*] I am perfectly aware of it, although I am astonished it should be known to you! [*Stopping to look at Lennox.*]

Len Your lordship will grant me the privilege——

Hol. [*Indignantly.*] No, I will not, nor will I permit you to say one word against his Grace. Do you realize, sir, that you are making known to me that which does not concern you?

Len. True, my lord. But let me ask you, my lord, for your sake, and for the honor of our country, and the safety of our lives, to grant me the privilege.

Hol. Man, you are mad, thus to speak to me!

Len. Excuse me, my lord; but I implore you to let me tell you!

Hol. Captain Lennox, leave this room, or I will have you placed under arrest.

Len. I humbly ask your lordship's pardon, [*trembling voice,*] but I must tell what I know to some one who can talk to his Grace, as I dare not!

Hol. Bernando! [*Servant enters.*] Go tell the Earl of Carlisle that I would be pleased to see him.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Hol. [*Looking at his watch.*] I have but three minutes to meet the Duchess in the parlors.

Enter Earl of Carlisle. R.

Earl. I am at your lordship's command.

Hol. [*Starting toward the door.*] Captain Lennox desires to communicate a matter that I have no time to hear. Grant him some indulgence and excuse me.

[*Exit* HOLLAND.

Earl. Well, Captain?

Len. Your Excellency, it is not for me to tell you, much less his Grace, the danger that we are in.

Earl. Danger! [*Excitedly.*] We are here as the special guests of his Majesty Louis, to safely take his sister Henrietta, after her marriage by proxy, to Charles. What more security could we ask than the friendship of France's king? Fear nothing. It is not characteristic of an English soldier to be a coward.

Len. [*Quickly stepping forward.*] A coward! did you say? Does your Excellency accuse me? Though I am but a humble English soldier, no one—

Earl. Pardon me, Captain; I did not accuse you. I was only telling you—

Len. Your Excellency will grant me a word. You must also accord to the French soldiers bravery and gallantry. If, when returning to England with Henrietta, a Frenchman should dare to attempt to approach her, with the sole purpose of making love, it would be my duty to kill him at once, would it not?

Earl. Correct, Lennox. [*Stepping to him, and patting his shoulder.*] Yes, you are correct, my brave fellow; you should kill him.

Len. Immediately!

Earl. Well what do you mean [*stepping back and folding his arms*] about our danger?

Len. What would you think of an Englishman, one of Buckingham's suite. one that was sent by Charles— [*excitedly.*]

Earl, Calm yourself, Lennox; something must be wrong, as I never before saw you in this condition of mind. Do you want to tell me that one of Charle's embassadors has failed to properly deport himself?

Len. It is more serious than that, your Excellency! one of Charle's emissaries has committed an offense against the crown of France!

Earl. Heavens! Who is the transgressor? [*His hands drop, as his fingers clinch.*] Who is the man, or the wretch, who dares offend France, and disgrace the fair name of England? What is the offense? Who, I ask?

Len. Buckingham!

Earl. It is fa—

Len. Your Excellency! [*Placing his hand on the hilt of his sword.*] I am but a soldier here, but do not finish that word!

Earl. Tell me what Buckingham has done?

Len. Not done! but what he is trying to do, through the machinations of bribery and undue influences, brought to bear upon the servants and ladies of Louis' court.

Earl. What will you have me to believe of the Duke of Buckingham? Speak quickly, or you will drive me mad.

Len. His Grace is attempting to make love to the queen.

Earl. Heavens, man! you are wild! You know not what you say.

Len. Is it possible that Charles shall be disgraced by the man in whom he has confided the most tender trust?

Earl. How do you know this to be true?

Len. I overheard the Duke de Chevreuse say to Marie de Medici that the gallant envoy, his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham, gave the Duchess de Chevreuse one hundred thousand livres, and the loan of two thousand pistoles, to assist him in winning the heart of Anne of Austria, the Queen of France.

Earl. That explains all! How dull I was not to realize the meaning what Marie de Medici said to me, from which I now understand that she is assisting Madame de Chevreuse to ruin her daughter-in-law. [*Astonished.*] Can a young queen have no protectors when the queen-mother and the ladies of her court jointly conspire her ruin?

Len. It is for this reason that the Duke of Buckingham and his suite is lodged in this hotel, close to the Louvre; that better opportunities be given Buckingham and the queen.

Earl. The prosecution of the queen by the queen-mother and Richelieu, has aroused for her the sympathy

of all fair-minded people.

Len. Such treatment operates to produce much of that wilfulness and rash imprudence by which her reputation incurred so severe an ordeal.

Earl. The wickedness of the youth Armand-Jean Duplesis has not been softened by the religious robes of a cardinal. [*Music; a grandmarch in the distance.*] What is that I hear?

Len. The opening of the great ball.

Earl. I must go; I am behind time. I will see you after the ball in the morning.

[*Exit* EARL to R.

Len. [*Alone.*] I will also go, and I will see that the fair name of England is ever kept pure.

[*Exit* LENNOX.

[*House darkened. Flats run.*]

SCENE II.—*Grand parlor in the Hotel de Chevreuse. General Diquemare and Henrietta discovered sitting on opposite sides of a large table.*

Hen. I am pleased with my engagement. Can one do better than to wed Charles of England, a man who loves me and is by me beloved.

Gen: Good heavens! Nothing can be more abomnible, than to play the part; wed a man who is not of your religious faith; to imprison yourself within castle walls; and get no glimpse of more exciting pleasures than associating with an English husband!

Hen. [*Rising quickly.*] It is a small matter to be the sister of a king, but an exalted position to be the wife of a king! [*bowing*] I a queen!

Diq. You have an example of that exalted position in your brother's palace; married to Anne of Austria, less

than a year ago, and now scarcely on speaking terms and living apart.

Hen. [*Again bowing.*] But Charles and I love one another.

Diq. [*Approaching her.*] You have your mother, Marie de Medici, as another living example. I beseech you to aspire to the knowledge which is in your family history.

Hen. My mind soars to the elevation of no regal splendor; [*throwing up her*] *hands* yours creeps in youthful passion.

Diq. Marry me, [*on one knee*] and invest reason with true affection, which elevates the human race. The sweet ties which makes happy a whole life

Hen. [*Looking down into his eyes.*] But you are not a king. [*Laughing.*] Let us not disturb the righteous arrangements of heaven; and let us each follow the promptings of our instincts. A man of your great genius should never marry; but I differing in wisdom, shall enjoy the earthly bliss of wedlock. Your great brain and culture entitle you to a field of labor beyond the ordinary person. Your soul is noble, your aspirations lofty, your chances of success brilliant. Believe me, no one will rejoice more heartily than I when I learn of your success. Your productions will be of mind and knowledge; mine, something else. [*Quickly, surprisedly placing her hand over her mouth.*]

Diq. [*Smiling, glancing his knowing expression eyes toward her.*] Well, yes! something else.

Hen. There was a time my eyes swayed my heart like proud tyrants; and I thought of no one but you. I could have lived alone with you, and longed for you. But time changes. I became wearied of childhood love. My ambition sought nothing less than a king. [*Laughing.*] And

after I received Charle's proposal the chain which bound you and me together lost its strength. I have found his qualities ever precious to me Such opportunity has had the effect of thus moving me, and there is naught that could induce me to break my pledge to him. [*Breaking loose from him and stepping back.*] Kindly do not attempt to regain my love, nor to call back a heart now given to one I love dearer than my life!

Diq. Would you have me die [*advancing*] when my life can be saved by your consent?

Hen. [*Raising her hand for him to advance no farther.*] I think it is amusing of you to presume su h a sacrifice on my part. [*Exit.*

Enter Duke de Belegrade and Marie de Medici. L.

De M. I hope you will excuse me. My mind was embarrassed, and I was not giving attention to what I was doing; but I know your gallantry will overlook my shortcoming.

Duke. Your majesty, [*surprised*] do you know whence comes the word "gallantry?"

Med. Its derivation is not concerning me; but I always find gallantry in a gentleman! I admire such a man as His Grace, the Duke of Buckingham

Duke. Aye, His Grace, the Duke of Buckingham! Buckingham, the gallant, high bred courtier, Buckingham!

MED. Don't be jealous. All you gentlemen are jealous of His Grace.

DUKE. Indeed, I am not sure but there are ample causes.

MED. Oh no! I mean only that his manly deportment, favorite of Anne of Austria, I know is the zealous spy for the Cardinal.

gentlemanly manners, and high-bred behavior entitles him to the first rank.

DUKE. Only too true. I have known something of his behavior. I have also known him [*laughing*] to take advantage of his opportunities.

MED. Why should he not persist? [*Looking at the Duke shyly.*]

DUKE No reason that I know. [*Side wink.*] I believe it is the custom for one who is in attendance at the court of a king, queen or prince, to take advantage of all opportunities.

MED. Oh! is it the custom? Be seated. [*Pointing to large arm chair.*]

DUKE [*Side glance: smiling.*] Does your Majesty ask me if it is the custom?

MED. Why should I not? [*Side wink*]

DUKE. Believe me, I thought your Majesty had experience. I have ofttimes heard it said that Marie de Medici graciously pleased all the kings, and dukes that she favored, and that the Luxembourg generally contained one of her favorites.

MED. True. I once entertained you there.

DUKE. Truly so, with sumptuous taste and gracious [*arising and bowing*] condescension.

MED. Then be not jealous. [*Fanning herself, unnoticed by the duke looking into the mirror.*]

DUKE. But there are unusual attentions shown to the Duke of Buckingham on this occasion.

MED. No, nothing unusual. [*Turning quickly*] It is right and proper, that his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, in the capacity of a trusted envoy for Charles, should safely conduct my daughter Henrietta, immediately

after her marriage by proxy, to Charles, King of England.

DUKE [*Excitedly.*] But why should his Grace be entertained at a house so close to the Louvre?

MED. Circumstances have made it so. The Duke de Chevreuse was chosen to act as proxy for Charles. This made it proper to lodge his Grace and suite at the hotel of the Duke de Chevreuse. These are circumstances that are not worth noticing.

DUKE. Not worth noticing! [*Striking his fist on the table*] Madame de Chevreuse, to whom Buckingham knows intrigue and mischief-making are as the air she breathes.

MED. Even so, I would hardly think—

DUKE. Hardly think that the Duke of Buckingham is not madly in love with Anne of Austria.

MED. The queen! [*Quickly raising her hands in terror*]

DUKE. Yes, your Majesty, your daughter-in-law.

MED. Impossible ! Impossible! [*Again raising her hands*]

DUKE. No, not impossible. I have positive proof that his Grace has been intriguing with Madame de Chevreuse, and has given her one hundred thousand livres, and the loan of two thousand pistoles, to assist him in winning the heart of the French queen.

MED. [*Bringing her hands together.*] Is it possible that the Duchess de Chevreuse is a woman bound to self-interest, a mercenary soul?

DUKE I know it to be true. [*Again striking the table.*] He has found an able ally through his whirl of gayety in his fascinating hostess; the Duchess.

MED. The want of love existing between Louis and Queen Anne, has given rise to scandal,

DUKE. As queen mother it is not a little surprising that you have not so arranged affairs as to prevent an opportunity for scandal.

MED. I will mention what you say to Marie de Rohan.

DUKE. Marie de Rohan! [*Suspicious smile.*] the lively

MED. It takes more than one to guard the queen.

DUKE. Spy! I pity the queen; doubly so when you, [*rising and walking toward her*] who should be her adviser and protector, speak thus of her.

MED. Duke de Bellegrade, [*bowing*] you do me too much honor. I have promised everything in my power to the entertainment of his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham; and since you have taken exceptions to my treatment of the queen, I shall explain to you my inability to influence her.

DUKE. Why do you not induce the king and queen to agree? It is the duty of a queen-mother, a mother-in-law! [*smiling*] to be a peacemaker; to strive to bring happiness to the king and queen.

MED. The wisdom of youth is to know how to enjoy its pleasures. [*Waking placing her hands on the back of a chair, as she smiled.*] Love charms. Without love no one can be happy. Vain would be my efforts to create happiness where love never existed.

DUKE. I do not blame his Grace for being in love of Anne of Austria. [*Folding his arms across his breast, looking at the queen-mother.*] She is exquisite in her beauty, and romantic in culture.

MED. As the Duke is prodigal! When Charles had concluded a marriage contract with Henrietta, I knew it would be Buckingham whom Charles would send here to take the young bride to him.

DUKE. I am in hopes that you will advise the young queen to be prudent in her association with the Duke of Buckingham.

MED. She never obeys me, and on this occasion I shall give her full sway, [*sternly*] that she may reap the consequences of her impropriety as soon as possible.

DUKE. To the close companionship and dangerous example of her majesty's witty favorite, Marie de Rohan, I attribute all the errors and misfortunes of the queen,

MED. Her majesty has been imbued by her mother, Margaret of Austria, with a lively piety and love of virtue, which should happily prove her best safeguards, through the many temptations of her life.

DUKE. But these safeguards are fearfully tested at this time by the influence of the force of bad examples. As one of the evil consequences upon estrangement from the king [*inquisitive manner*] she seems to have imbibed the idea of platonic attachments?

MED. Only for effect. [*Laughing.*] She is adopting Italian modes of thought and action, which are in favor with a certain class of clever free-thinking Frenchwomen.

DUKE. Hush, here comes the Duke de Chevreuse, in jeweled raiment, and Marie de Rohan. We were speaking of this sentimentality—perhaps more dangerous to virtue than the more undisguised allurements of vice.

MED. Her Platonic notions are gleaned from Spanish romances. She always is inspired with the desire to subdue the hearts of distinguished persons; harmlessly [*side wink*] of course.

Enter DUKE DE CHEVREUSE *and* MARIE DE ROHAN.

DUKE C Ah! queen-mother and Duke, I was about to say, now that we find his Grace the object of the queen's marked attentions, and under circumstances, too, that lend a novel and peculiar interest to their associations—the ardent envoy gives himself to a passion as ardent as it is presumptuous, and is occupying himself solely with attempting the subjugation of the queen.

ROHAN. The Duke of Buckingham, the hero of the queen's imagination, has brought all his fascinations into play, for the purpose of capturing her heart. This I know, because I have all the queen's secrets.

DUKE C. And all the queen's secrets you divulge to her worst enemy, Cardinal Richelieu.

ROHAN. I blush to confess that while I am the queen's confidential friend, I am a spy for the king and Richelieu.

DUKE C. Not entirely concurring in that opinion of

your faithlessness, I am inclined to believe that there are other influences shadowing the queen's happiness, and estranging her from her consort.

ROHAN. True! her persecution by Richelieu has operated to produce much of that rash imprudence of her conduct by which her reputation has suffered so severe a trial.

DUKE B. In the trouble into which I see his Majesty plunged, it might be better for a separation from the queen, which would permit Buckingham's marriage with Anne of Austria. This with the approaching marriage of Charles and Henrietta would unite the three kingdoms! [*Rising, smiling pleasantly.*]

MED. It is not a question of money or personal charms.

DUKE C. This foolish queen is charmed by the piercing soft eyes, [*looking Rohan in the face and slowly advancing*] gracefulness and austerity of his Grace. She would sacrifice her existence for his love.

ROHAN. Buckingham's beauty and manliness are the riches which draw her affections and tenderness toward him; these are the only treasures of which she is enamored.

DUKE B. The king has no faith in the assurance of her Majesty's innocence; nor is he inclined to give her any credit for the preservation of a goodness, which, according to his views of the case, are dependent upon the watchfulness of those by whom she is surrounded.

ROHAN. Anne of Austria has found to her cost how greatly her levity has strengthened the hands, and inflamed the jealousy of Richelieu, and largely injured her in the public mind.

MED. His Grace's glitter and confusion are well calculated to please the taste of Parisians.

ROHAN. It is the subject of remark that all his clothes on this occasion will be embroidered with diamonds.

DUKE C. I want to say to you, queen-mother, that I

have private information that Buckingham during this evening will assume various disguises; that in each disguise will continue his love-making with the queen, while his Majesty may see her entertained each time, will think her attendant a different person.

Enter EARL OF KINGSTON. R. [*A typical English dude, wearing nose glasses.*]

EARL. [*Bowing. addressing de Medici.*] I would be pleased to be introduced to the queen of France. I know I do not rank with his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham, but I am an English Earl and a gentleman of distinction, worthy of royal notice, and being that I am one of the embassadors commissioned to assist in conducting Henrietta to King Charles of England, may I not be regarded as too [*again bowing*] presumptious.

MED. You shall be honored at the proper time. But let me ask if you are not appearing in the role of a clown rather than of an English nobleman?

EARL. Your highness, overlooks the fact of my youth; and you have failed to notice the excess of gravity in the manners of the other gentlemen of our party; hardly becoming the conduct of embassadors filling the duties of our commission. [*Again bowing.*] I say, your Majesty, I'm nigh in love with the young queen.

French SERVANT *in livery about to enter.*

EARL. [*Going toward servant.*] I say Chappie! Do you know where I can find the queen?

[*Servant surprised, looks at him with contempt.*] I say Chappie, I want to see the Queen.

Enter MARIE DE ROHAN, C.

DE ROHAN. Queen-mother, [*Starting as she notices the Earl.*]

MED. Madame de Rohan, permit me to introduce the Earl of Kingston, who desires an introduction to her Majesty.

Enter BELLARIO THE EQUERRY, L.

EARL. I am fortunate in being thus favored. My dear

Madame I ask that you take an interest in my behalf [*Turning and pointing toward Bellario.*] I say Madame, why is that Chappie watching me?

BELL. [*Walking toward queen-mother and bowing.*] Your Majesty, I have the honor of announcing of the coming of her Majesty and his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham.

ROHAN. Ah! here they are, let us step aside.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ANNE *of Austria and his Grace, the* DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, C

[*Music in the wings. Buckingham in costume of "uncut velvet," blazing with diamonds. Collars and badges of the Garter and St. Esprit, the Golden Fleece, and the order of St George.*]

ANNE. After this assurance I feel somewhat relieved; but this relief must not be construed into a concession on my part. [*The queen fanning herself vigorously.*] But amidst this supreme happiness, I have the misfortune to know that the man whom I love is not within my control.

BUC. Dissipate your fears, and allow me to give you a seat and assure you that he is under your control; and that his obedience to you is the greatest happiness to which he aspires.

ANNE. You do not know the possibility of my demands.

BUC. I have sworn. I can no longer resist, but must yield to whatever you demand. I am no longer my own master.

ANNE. You do not know what you have said. I am not so ungrateful as to demand the fulfillment of your oath.

BUC. Then you have a secret reason? [*Standing beside the chair in which she is seated, taking her fan, fanning her.*]

ANNE. Yes, but let me keep my secret. If I disclose the secret, you would never forgive me.

BUC. You are supreme, and I am entirely yours.

ANNE. [*Moving her hands*] I am not so cruel.

BUC. But you are married.

ANNE. [*Sighing.*] Too true.

BUC. The wife of a man that hates me.

ANNE. A wife in name only!

BUC. Do I hear you say in name only?

ANNE. [*Bowing.*] I so swear.

BUC. Then I love you more dearly than ever.

ANNE. I shouldn't have said so much.

BUC. [*Animated.*] If you'll but swear to so remain—

ANNE. Do not ask more.

BUC. Would to God, I could tell you how I love you? If you doubt my sincerity, [*stepping aside and starting to draw his sword*] let me measure lengths with your little king.

ANNE. You are a madman! You know not what you say. [*Quickly arising*]

BUC. I mean I am yours; and I am ready to die for you. Does your Majesty wish to test me?

ANNE. I have rejected more from kings.

BUC. Pray tell me what cruel destiny have you drawn upon me.

ANNE. Your Excellency renders me desperate.

BUC. Your Majesty should reflect well upon my willingness to aid you. Let us unite our affections, and the god of love becomes a happy lover, and we will celebrate the grand day; let our unity be known to all; let it echo through Europe.

ANNE. My religion forbids me. [*sternly.*]

BUC. Love is the inheritance of mankind. Pleasures have their turns; it is their sweetest use to satisfy.

ANNE. When one has to sigh, with love, all the evil does not consist in becoming enamored.

BUC. Your Majesty fears too much.

ANNE. When sacrifices terminate in martyrdom the penalty is too great for the pleasure.

BUC. When one reasons beyond limit, it is like the follies which wine causes. [*Smiling as she bows*]

ANNE. The difference is, that when one is drunk with

wine, it is ofttimes finished in one day; but when a heart is drunk with love, it is often for the whole of life. Be less severe; at least allow yourself to be overcome by higher motives of tenderness. Consider the rights of others, and inquire if you can afford to be in this way swayed from reason.

[*Buckingham handling a bouquet on the mantle broke off a flower, which falls to the floor.*] Will you give me that broken flower?

BUC. Certainly, with pleasure. [*Picking it up and reaching it to her.*]

[*As their hands touch she seems magnetized.*]

BUC. I care not for conjugal bonds, and I renounce all haughty dispositions which oppose my ambition.

ANNE. Let me advise you rather to think of me no more; let me be to you as though you had never chanced to see me.

BUC. If you could see into my heart, you would pity me; and love me.

ANNE. No! my affection for you never reached farther than gratitude I do not doubt the sincerity of your many oaths.

BUC Well, then! why should you not fly with me and become my wife?

ANNE. Your Excellency would have me give up my all to satisfy your wishes.

BUC. Your Majesty has well said—

ANNE. It is asking too much for what I should receive in return.

BUC. [*Piqued.*] Oh! I am not much, am I? You know not the lover you have charmed! Do you wish to make this new-born glory vanish? [*On one knee taking her hand between his.*] You do not trust me; refuse me, and fate, beneath whom heaven trembles, shall punish you for your cruelty.

ANNE Your Excellency cannot wish, the moment you love, to forever cherish and control the object of your

choice.

BUC. Then let me die! [*Arising quickly.*] It is the only solution of the grief that I endure. Could I wish to live? And for whom could I form new desires? O, [*Walking away with his hands up*;] wide blue ocean whose waters forever cover the mysteries of the deep, bury me beneath thy waves!

ANNE. Your rashness should avoid such acts. Take your fate manfully; [*arising*] let your sorrow be profound and your grief sublime. After that another and more worthy object of your love awaits you. Let your love for me die within you, and the charms of a new love evoke in you life anew. [*Stopping, turning quickly.*] Your Excellency, this is no play. Who sees this, sees real life.

BUC. But yesterday, I saw nothing in my future but happiness?

ANNE. Your Excellency would have me sacrifice all that is dear to a good woman, and bow in obedience to your charms?

BUC. My blood is as warm, as my soul is prodigal.

ANNE. A prodigal soul gives the tongue false vows!

BUC. The better to beguile; yet oft breaking down the pales of reason.

Enter BELLARIO.

ANNE. What now?

BEL. The king.

ANNE. Well, Bellario!

SER The king desires your presence.

ANNE. Tell his Majesty that I will be with him presently.

[*Exit* BELLARIO.

ANNE. I fear my stay with you has displeased the king. [*Walking and looking down the wings.*]

BUC. You would not have me to fear the king?

ANNE. Should he accuse you of seeking my love, then fear only for yourself; it is you who are to be pitied.

BUC. Thus vanishes all fright, to know that I have no

fear but for myself. [*Advancing with open arms toward her.*]

ANNE. [*Her open hand toward him.*] Your Grace!

BUC. Your Majesty, must know that we are alone. [*queen retreating.*] We may not be again favored by such an opportunity. We are alone, your Majesty! We are alone!

ANNE. Allow me to retire and obey the king who has permitted me here. [*Walking away.*]

BUC. But stay, and tell me when shall we again meet and what shall then be my hopes.

ANNE. [*Frightened.*] Do not detain me! You know not the anger of a jealous husband.

BUC. Tell me the reason of your emotion? [*Going toward the queen.*]

ANNE. The king is suspiciously vigilant.

BUC. But I can't let you go until you promise me—

ANNE. I will not promise you! Allow me to obey my husband! It is better that I tell you some other time, that which grieves me so much.

BUC. I do not care for the woman who only loves in words.

ANNE. You'd have me share an equal guilt, and bear an equal blame.

BUC. If you love me you'll share my fate.

ANNE. I to share your fate?

BUC. Make your choice.

ANNE. I have not failed to express my thoughts.

BUC. What weakness!

ANNE. What martyrdom! [*Placing a chair between the duke and herself.*]

BUC. Is there no way that I can succeed? [*Placing his hand on back of chair.*]

ANNE. There are, in those affairs of love's mystery, certain little moments in which the most severe change makes lovers happy.

BUC. Then when may I hope? Let me know, [*again on knee, taking her hand*] that I may be cheered, that I may

release my heart from the cruel feeling that exercises merciless sway!

ANNE. Alas! how can I, when the danger is so great

BUC. Do you look upon me as a guileless beast, that cannot live without restraint?

ANNE. Whence comes this madness? It can no longer be called love. Love is mild and tender; love is an affection of the heart; excited by that which delights admiration. Not to craze; to woo, and not to command; to cherish, not to fear. It is devotion, not wickedness, it is sacred, not criminal; it is kindness, not reproach; it is affection, not hatred; it is friendship, not enmity; it is tenderness, not roughness; it is delightful, not miserable.

Enter BELLARIO.

ANNE. Well, now?

BEL. His Majesty's commands!

ANNE. In a few moments I will join his Majesty

[*Exit* EQUERRY.

BUC. Will you excuse my act, my heart is full of insensibility, and arouses the passions that move me.

ANNE. [*Clasping her hands.*] In the name of heaven, the honor of a gentleman, go! I implore you not to compromise me! Do not you see the king has twice demanded my return? He knows we are together.

BUC. [*Bowing.*] I can refuse nothing solicited in those terms. I will leave the Earl of Kingston in Paris; he will act the part of joker, jester and fool, but he will keep me informed.

[*Exit* BUCKINGHAM.

[*The queen, alone. Her ladies-in-waiting seen at a distance conversing with Earl of Kingston.*]

ANNE. He is gone. [*Excited.*] My love burns within me. The duke alone has charmed me. I love him. [*Walking rapidly about.*] I shall again say something that will please him; something to recover my plighted faith. But what have I to inspire me with such hopes? My beauty pleases him. [*Her hands over her eyes.*] What

vapors dim my brain? Though I have displeased him, I have only interested myself in my own behalf. I have sighed for the misfortunes attending a marriage without being a wife. My misery, my grief have everywhere accompanied my tears. Yet, [*stopping suddenly*] I repeat aloud that the heavens may hear it, that I will always be true to my vows; though all happiness on earth vanish from me, I shall bear the pain, and await the premium that heaven offers for the good. I have wavered between right and wrong; but God knows I have not yielded I shall be guided by the immortal flames that are fostered by heaven.

Enter KING LOUIS XIII, C.

[*Stopping to hear what the queen is saying.*]

KING. Ah, what is this I hear; the libertine; the tempter, has sought you ere we're married a year!

ANNE. Have the king confidence in his queen?

KING. Yes, and I honor you, for what you have just said, [*on one knee*] and I am determined to place you beyond the reach of the tempter.

ANNE. Where?

KING. In a convent!

ANNE. Why in the solitude of a convent?

KING. Because, my respect for you is not warmed by love's passion!

ANNE. [*Appealing.*] But the time may come when—

KING. Yes, your Majesty, the time may come when the Good Lord will say: "Louis, love thy Anne for henceforth she shall be your wife."

ANNE. Your wife, did I hear you say? To what happy inspiration do I owe this declaration of hope.

KING. But your majesty must until that day, secret yourself in a nunnery.

ANNE. I shall not be tempted.

KING. You are a beautiful woman. The worldlings of all the courts in Europe are at your feet, with their admiring eyes, their sweet beguiling tongues, they are all

bold and vigorous in manhood.

ANNE. [*Very determined.*] I shall never go to a nunnery!

KING. Only until—

ANNE. Marriage, is the legal union of a man and woman for life!

KING. Aye, a man!

ANNE And a woman

KING. Yes, Anne, [*placing his hand on her head*] the woman is here, you are human, you are human.

ANNE. [*Pathetically.*] I am not lacking indulgence

KING. You may have our marriage declared void *ab initio.*

ANNE. I shall remain with you [*rising quickly*] until death shall desolve our marriage.

KING. If you honestly want to avoid the Duke's love, in your despair, retire and seek at the icy foot of the Cross, the strength to extinguish the unholy love he has enkindled in your heart.

ANNE. Did you not hear the bishop say: "Louis, will you take Anne for your wife?"

KING. Yes, your Majesty.

ANNE. Didn't you reply, "I will."

KING. Yes, your Majesty, I so promised.

ANNE. Didn't you hear the bishop say: "Anne will you take Louis for your husband."

KING. Yes, your Majesty.

ANNE. Didn't you hear me reply, "Yes, I will."

KING. Yes, your Majesty.

ANNE. I will keep my promise. When I felt you press the cold, gold ring over my finger, I was not aware that you intended the symbol of eternal union as an empty ornament.

KING. But, I am the king!

ANNE Didn't you leave me at the church door, never to meet you again only on public occasions like this.

KING. By our marriage Austria and France alone

were united

ANNE. Then why your false promise at the throne and in the presence of God?

KING. For the peace and the welfare of two great nations.

ANNE. You ask me to dwell in solitude for the peace of Austria and France?

KING. I have obeyed the requirements of the ministry.

ANNE. Your promise should be the more sacred since Austria did not solicit the marriage.

KING. The less sacred, since France had to solicit.

ANNE. Do you now want me to sacrifice my life's happiness?

KING. I do not want you to sacrifice your salvation in the next world.

ANNE. I am in no danger.

KING. I was about to concede to your wishes; when I beheld you nearly in the arms of the Duke.

ANNE. It is false, it is false!

KING. I see your love for Buckingham glaring in your eyes.

ANNE. My conduct to the Duke was but tokens of gratitude due the prime minister of a friendly nation.

KING. Your behavior appeared to me as tokens of love!

ANNE. Aye, the action of the human heart; should not [*side glance*] love another since you love me not?

KING. Go, go to a convent and become a sweet-faced queen-nun.

ANNE. No, I will not, though the day will come when on your knees, you will make atonement for the past, and you will ask my pardon for causing me to suffer.

KING Well, if such shall be the case, I will kneel at your feet like a king. [*Laughing, stopping short.*] Dare you before me say you have been ill-treated?

ANNE. Have I not suffered in silence?

KING. You have grieved to meet the man who today declared his guilty passions.

ANNE. Did I say I loved Buckingham?

KING. I love the woman, who when in danger will cry for her protector.

ANNE. I have no protector, No man whose confidante I am.

KING. I saw you and Buckingham glide, like phantoms, down the corridor, to whisper the words of love's madness; which proves your guilty intentions.

ANNE. I would like to see the man I married rise to his sense of duty, and declare to me that he will make good his promises.

KING. You demand that of me at the feet of my rival?

ANNE. Yes, sire, for in royal marriages, magnitude of love should be the measure of rank.

KING. Shall a king love his consort better than any other woman?

ANNE. Yes, sire; because she should be your wife as well as your queen.

CURTAIN.

Act II.

SCENE. *In apartments of the* QUEEN. *The queen and the Countess Lannoi discovered. The queen painting.*

COUN. Richelieu has firm faith in the tradition that the White Lady revisits the Louvre once each year, and has done so for centuries.

ANNE [*Smiling as she drops the brush.*] Richelieu is a wise man. What he believes must be true. [*Picking up her brush and resuming her work.*]

COUN. True, though I'm old I have never seen the ghost. Yet I have lived here twenty years.

ANNE. [*Smiling*] Can you faint without screaming?

COUN. No, [*walking close to the door.*] but I can become frightened and run without screaming.

COUN. I fear your Majesty has given ear to the sweet words of the Duke of Buckingham.

ANNE. Buckingham plays the part of lover well; he

shall have tribute from me; the adventurous knight shall not use his foil and sword; but as a lover shall not sigh in vain; he shall be successful to the extent that is consistent [*aside*) to honor.

COUN. Even though he indulge in such delight as his passions crave.

ANNE. And I be a party to that pleasure!

COUN. Should the king chance to know—

ANNE. Yes, though the king should chance to know.

COUN. Such inhibitions comes by way of innovation.

ANNE. Aye, I'll sacrifice form that I may—

COUN. Hold your Majesty! I cannot give heed to such departure from court custom.

ANNE. But I am queen!

COUN. And I your lady-of-honor, whose duty it is to see strict observance of court customs.

ANNE. Court customs to the winds! I must have my own way for once in my life.

COUN. Give thought to your admiration of the Duke, with an attent ear, till I learn his motive.

ANNE. O, to restrain my liberty and my tongue, now, above all times in life I can use both to such an advantage, would be to do me great harm.

COUN. No, but to restrain most wicked speed.

ANNE. I will prophesy, that he will come and declare his love; mark it.

COUN. Declare his love to a married woman, and virtuous queen; horrible!

ANNE. [*Laughing.*] You! [*Laughing.*] You have lost the fire of youth! second time will come to you; for they say that an old woman is twice a child. What would you do, [*laughing*] had you the motive and the cue for passion that I have? You would welcomingly proclaim, come! noble Duke of Buckingham and see your love!

COUN. I would not soil my mouth with such a profane speech, nor expose the guilt of a false heart.

ANNE. Do not grate so harshly; a younger person

might think you a lunatic; [*laughing.*]

COUN. Keep aloof from such madness, or your conduct will brighten the way to hell! Such a course leads to evil; and the devil hath power to assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps, out of your weakness you may be lost before you realize it. I pray you overstep not the modesty due a queen.

ANNE My dear countess, remain nearby [*laughing*] that you as 'twere by accident, may be within my call [*laughing*]

COUN. I shall obey you, and shall pray that your goodness will restrain Buckingham's madness.

[*Rapping at the door*]

COUN Come!

Enter BELLARIO.

BEL. [*Excited.*] The White Lady! the White Lady!

Enter tall form wrapped in white silk shawl, C.

COUN. Heavens save me! [*Running from the room.*]

[*Exit* COUNTESS.

BUC. [*Dropping on one knee, and throwing off the white shawl; passionately kissing the queen's hand.*] At last I have you alone! Quick! tell me if you still love me?

ANNE. It is better that my lips may not express the sentiment of my heart.

BUC. But say yes.

ANNE. If I said no, would you have come?

BUC. I wish to be the nearest to your heart.

ANNE. My heart [*mischievously twitching her eyes*] sighs for the heart it wants.

BUC. Cupid has shot the dart that wounded my heart.

ANNE. And you came here to see if I had any remaining darts?

BUC. [*Again kissing her hand.*] It is very sweet to hear these words from your lips. The happiness of pleasing you is my highest study, and my heart reposes all its bliss in your affection.

ANNE. You seemingly understand the art of express-

ing your emotions. But I have not forgotten your affection for the Countess—

BUC. Ah, she is very good, [*rising to his feet, her hand between his*] but her age has put this ardent zeal into her breast, [*withdrawing her hand.*] She enjoyed her advantages well enough as long as she was capable of attracting attention; but, seeing the lustre of her eyes become somewhat dim, she renounced the world, and conceals herself under the pompous cloak of lofty wisdom, and the decay of her worn-out charms. [*Laughing.*]

ANNE. You express your thoughts somewhat freely.

BUC. I may be allowed this freedom, [*again taking her hand*] seeing that my heart's choice warrants it.

ANNE. You shock me! [*Pulling her hand loose, and regarding him with severity.*]

BUC. My appeal affects no modesty.

ANNE Assume a modest demeanor, if you have it not.

BUC. My only hope [*making a low courtesy*] depends on your choice.

ANNE. Then I have no difficulty in deciding. Your conduct is void of virtue.—

BUC. Virtue! Aye, let virtue be as the rosin in the pine tree, melt in its own flame; declare neither goodness nor shame; and let the world guess at what happens.

ANNE. Speak no more unholy man, for your breath withers all it touches.

BUC. Do not tell me that my wishes shall be thus rejected, [*following her.*]

ANNE. It is a weakness of woman's heart, not to say no, when her honor is tainted by saying yes.

BUC. Heaven has given you no cruel heart.

ANNE. That is justice to the king and myself.

BUC. If, by loving you, I do the king a wrong, you have no part in the sin. [*Again approaching her.*]

ANNE. Then, to love you I can escape the consequence of my own folly?

BUC. I perceive by the blush that rises to your face,

that my words do not please you.

ANNE. It is because my ears fear to hear, the answer of my heart's desire; and my brain says the effect will wound another heart.

BUC. What other heart?

ANNE. The king!

BUC. Then tell me my fate! [*On one knee, interlaced hands.*]

ANNE. That is just what you will not want to hear.

BUC. It is because you will not enter into the feelings of a heart full of tender passion, [*arising.*]

ANNE. Go! Leave me, that I may consider.

BUC. How can we meet again? The White Lady does not make daily visits.

ANNE. Go! I'll find a way to meet you.

BUC. Behold my heart; [*on one knee, taking her hand*] taking your hand does not electrify you as it did the first time our hands touched.

ANNE. [*Motioning him to arise.*] Love always comes to young hearts surrounded by sweet guiles, but in different ways.

BUC. [*Hands over his heart.*] Oh my heart! my heart!

ANNE. [*Laughing.*] You can imagine naught but joy and pleasure from this budding love, that flatters your desires.

BUC. No, not budding, but full in bloom!

ANNE. But, you do not think of the cruel misfortune with which fate threatens me.

BUC. My heart! my heart! Ah, what have I done, that you treat my tenderness so harshly, and judge me so cruel!

ANNE. Your appeals will not conquer my heart, and may destroy our happiness in the future. But I'll say to you that I'll remember you! That is sufficient. I am sincere, which to doubt is to offend me.

BUC. At last! at last! [*Quickly arising.*]

ANNE. Platonic love is dangerous.

BUC. But when—

ANNE. Do not indulge my heart in hope, and render my misfortune the more unhappy.

BUC. Am I to invoke the aid of oaths, when I promise to love you forever?

ANNE. How you wrong yourself by such alarms! Be seated: you may need your strength in getting away from here.

BUC. And how little you know of your charms!

ANNE. I accept your word. [*seating herself in an armchair.*]

BUC. Accept the pledge which I give you, and suffer my lips to seal the oath with transports on this fair hand, [*on one knee beside her, again kissing her hand.*] How sweet the caress of an ardent lover! [*letting the hand drop on her lap.*] And how far the king is from all this tenderness.

ANNE. How your words cheer me. [*looking tenderly in his face.*]

[*A noise in the closet, the door slightly ajar; the queen frightened.*] I thought I heard a noise!

BUC. It is nothing; give me something that I can kiss each day in remembrance of you.

ANNE. [*Taking a ring from her finger, kissing it and then placing it on his finger.*] Keep this forever. Whenever you kiss it, my lips will respond as though they met yours. [*Duke rising quickly. Noise of a man running.*]

Enter BELLARIO, L.

BEL. The king! the king!

ANNE. Fly!

BUC. [*Drawing the shawl over him.*] He will not know me. I'll brave even the king.

ANNE. [*Greatly excited.*] If in your heart a spark of friendship inspires you with the slightest pity for my fate, go! leave me!

BUC. Cannot I hide until the king depart?

ANNE. No, fly! I say fly!

BUC. [*Starting, hesitating.*] Can I see you again ere I

depart for England?

ANNE. Madame de Chevreuse will inform you, fly!

BUC. [*Kissing her hand.*] Our parting is a reminder of friendship.

ANNE. Go I pray you fly! For your life fly!

BUC. [*Taking a ring from his finger and giving it to the queen.*] Keep this as a reminder of me. Now which way?

ANNE. [*Pointing to back door.*] Through that door and down the back stairway.

The king enters the hall door, and sees Buckingham pass out the rear door.

[*Exit* WHITE LADY.

KING. What is it I see?

ANNE. An apparition. [*In simulating fright, she faints.*]

KING. What is that in white I saw going out the back door?

Enter COUNTESS LANNOI, R.

COUN. A ghost, Your Majesty, it is the White Lady.

Ladies-in-waiting enter unobserved by the king.

KING. I am glad I came in so suddenly, I have never seen her before, though tradition has it that she has visited the Louvre for centuries. I hope she has not frightened you, my dear? [*going and consoling the queen.*]

ANNE. Sire, I love you!

KING. I can not give you in return the love that is due you.

ANNE. Not actuated alone by jealousy?

KING. I cannot accuse you, for you have done nothing, so I accuse myself of being unworthy of you. I regret that the custom of kingdoms require marriages where the marriage state should not exist. What I fear is, that your beauty may be the ruin of your honesty.

ANNE. Sire, fear not for me!

KING. Fear not for you. My mother's indiscretion has caused me a life of shame. Have I not reason to fear? I want to hear of no more temptations. I give

you all that is in my heart for woman.

ANNE. If I want in goodness, or in power to please you do not think that it is caused by a lack of qualities that is dear to woman.

KING. I can forgive you; for I lack in gallantry, spirit and all that makes man happy. It is not in external, nor in manner and spirit that I care to appear; for I am but the impersonation of man.

ANNE. Louis!

KING. Your graceful movements, unconscious dignity, buoyancy, and spontanious womanly feeling is all that I expected.

ANNE. But she has. [*Again faints*]

KING. If it had not been the White Lady, but a man in white, he would have caused no fright. [*Laughing.*]

COUN. [*Placing a bottle to the queen's nose.*] This will revive her

ANNE. [*Arousing.*] It was always my hope that the White Lady would not appear to me. [*Bottle to her nose.*]

KING. There my dear, calm yourself. Bellario where are the ladies-in-waiting? [*Turning he discovers them all standing inside the room.*]

ROHAN. Her Majesty faints again!

COUN. [*Putting a bottle to her nose.*] She opens her eyes.

ANNE. [*Striking her hands aimlessly in the air.*] What have I seen?

MED. A ghost my child! a ghost!

ANNE. [*Insane.*] It is not a ghost for [*rising*] which I am sighing; I beheld in the king that bliss which ever forms the weight of my wishes. But I live only in forlorn hopes

MED. [*Aside.*] Hush, child, the king always believed in the White Lady.

ANNE. Did you ever see her?

MED. [*Aside*] No, never! That is, [*a low tone in her ear*] it wasn't necessary for me to see her. Do not entertain any doubt.

ROH. Was she old, or young? [*winking at Marie de Medici.*]

ANNE. [*Arising quickly, and excited.*] Wrinkles of a thousand years, each finger six inches long, with nails like claws of an eagle. Her sunken eyes like two graves; high nose like a tombstone; her ears like a monster fungus growth on dead wood; her eyes like the dim reflections of two far-off stars, her breath like a blizzard blown from a frozen zone; her voice like the hissing noise of a viper.

KING Oh! she breathes! she breathes! does she? I thought ghosts didn't breathe!

ANNE. That is I could feel the air about her, blowing toward me. It might have been caused by the cold air that followed her from the sepulcher.

VER. Did she speak to you?

ANNE. In a low, hissing voice, as she laid her clammy hand on mine, she asked, "Has the king endeared himself to your affections?"

KING. What was your reply?

ANNE. I quickly replied: He has.

KING. I am glad to know it.

MED. What did the White Lady then say?

ANNE. Beware! beware! When she thus spoke, she shook her long bony finger at me, and at the same time grinned, a hateful smile of irony. Oh, dear Louis, I wished you had been present.

ROH. Oh, yes, [*winking at Medici*] the king should have been present.

COUN. Kings like other husbands, should always be with their wives.

VER. [*Addressing de Medici.*] Your Majesty, it has been the wish of your life to see the White Lady?

A noise in the closet, the door opens and Richelieu steps out, all horrified.

RICHELIEU. I have heard the explanation of her Majesty, and I would have believed it, as I did always believe

in the visits of the White Lady. But I had reason to apprehend there was another who wanted to play the role of the White Lady, and as a friend to the king, I was determined to be here for once in life when the White Lady made her call. I secreted myself in the closet. I was here when she came. I was here when she departed. History does not inform us of her nationality, but we all believed her to be French. For years we've been mistaken. She is English. We always supposed she was a woman, but I saw her face, and she is a man.

ANNE. It is false! [*In great anger.*]

RICH. The White Lady is not only a man, but the best looking man in all England; one who has the reputation of being the world's greatest courtier

KING. Great heavens! What have I heard! is it credible?

Queen faints.

RICH. His great zeal for her Majesty has just shown itself. He aims at nothing less than dishonoring the throne of France. I have just heard him making to the queen an insulting avowal of a guilty passion Her sweet disposition and her too discreet feelings would by all means have kept the secret from you; but I cannot encourage such silence, and believe that to have been silent about it would have been to encourage his return.

KING. Great heavens! Would that I had been here! Ladies-in-waiting, and ladies-of-honor, what were you all doing, and what are you here for? Bellario, I say, what do you guard her Majesty's door for? In what way do you account for your lack of duty? Did English gold blind you, all of your eyes? Countess Lannoi, you, whom I could always depend upon, answer first?

COUN. [*Addressing the Cardinal*] Cardinal Richelieu! who in religion is my father, dare you by this falsehood, through eaves-dropping, an act beneath the pride and honor of a cardinal or a duke, tarnish the purity of this virtuous queen? [*Then turning to the king.*] What would

this jealous hypocrite make your Majesty believe? That in the darkness of a private closet he slept and dreamed that a man entered this room, with an equerry standing at the door, and the room and queen, surrounded by all the ladies in-waiting, who know nothing of what he tells you.

VER. It is not for me to say that the Cardinal-duke, who stands nearest to your Majesty, and who is your adviser, is also a falsifier, and a traducer of virtue.

ROH. Do not accuse the Cardinal harshly.

COUN. Dare you take the Cardinal's part? or say a word in his behalf; or vouch for the truth of what he says? though you have been accused of being his spy, [*shaking her finger at de Rohan.*] Mind you, I say accused; I'm making no charge.

VER. No, Countess, Madame de Rohan did not mean that the Cardinal told the truth, but she did not want one so near the king, to be denounced as a falsifier. I believe, as it seems her Majesty does, that the Cardinal fell asleep in the closet, else the appearance of the White Lady would have awakened him. Had he seen an Englishman in her Majesty's room, such an outrage would have moved him to such a rage that he would have thrown open the door and strangled the intruder.

ROH. I believe every word her ladyship has just said. Cardinal Richelieu is too honorable a man, too loyal to the crown, to his king, to have remained quietly in a closet and see invaded the sanctity of her Majesty's private chamber by an amorous courtier; and still remain quiet and have his ears polluted by insulting avowals of a guilty passion; hear the queen resent them, as the Cardinal admits. Yet he, Richelieu, both Cardinal and Duke, and the king's adviser, and closest friend, sat within arm's reach of the would-be destroyer of virtue, and say not a word. No, Cardinal, you were dreaming. What think you?

RICH. I have spoken.

KING. Speak again, and tell me did you not stand within arm's length of a destroyer of my happiness and permit him to insult the queen?

RICH. Let me answer later.

EQU. If an Englishman had passed in at this door, even though he were clothed as a woman I'd smell him and run my sword through him.

KING. [*Patting him on the shoulder.*] Brave Bellario! I believe you.

ROH. [*Speaking aside to Richelieu.*] To save yourself, believe in our story I have always been your friend, and often your spy. I have never failed to serve you. It is now time for you to serve me. [*Aloud.*] Do you hear me? Tell the truth!

COUN. Why trust to a dream and not believe us who were all awake and on duty?

RICH. Every one takes me for a godly man, and I don't want now to admit that I have lied.

VER. Noo, but admit that you have told an improbable story, that you yourself regret.

ROH. A story, which if true, would show your total want of gallantry and patriotism. One that would compromse not only you but the crown.

COUN. A story, which if made public, would set all England laughing at France, would be the jest of the bar rooms, and the witticism of the stage. If true, why didn't you strangle the monster with your naked hands? Why did you lie curled up in the closet like a miserable crawling snake, waiting to be stepped upon before you'd even fight in your own defense? [*Turning to the king.*] This is not the true character of our Cardinal; thank God, it is not. [*To the Cardinal.*] You were dreaming. Don't you know that you were dreaming?

RICH. [*Aside to de Rohan.*] Is it of interest to you that I should have been dreaming?

ROA. To save yourself from public ridicule, I say yes. It is important for you to so declare!

VER If you will not admit what you have told was the wild fancy of a dream, I will prefer charges against you for treason!

RICH. And who will be your witnesses, and what is your proof?

VER. All present are my witnesses. You admit you heard an enemy insult the queen, that she resented the insult and you by your silence and refusal to help her in her moment of great need, consented to the insult, thereby aiding and abetting the enemy, in trying to disgrace the queen.

COUN I will join as a witness and prosecutor. I will spend every dollar of my dowry, and if necessary sell my jewels to see the traducer of her Majesty's character guillotined.

RICH. Load me with detestable crimes, I shall not contradict them.

CNUN. You are aware, that I know the motive of your attack. Jealous Cardinal, you should throw off the robes you've long since disgraced.

RICH. To offend a saintly person in this way—

COUN. A lecherous traducer of character.

RICH. Could you know my grief at seeing myself humiliated in the presence of the king and queen.

VER. Oh, dear!

RICH. The horror I conceive—my heart is so oppressed that I cannot speak.

COUN. Then dream aloud. I'm sorry that I've not long since exposed your hypocrisy.

VER. To annoy the queen has been your greatest delight

RICH. I shall shun the queen and the Louvre in the future. I shall not care whether the White Lady or a black one comes. I'll not be here.

ROH. But first make honorable amends for what you have said.

RICH. [*To the Countess.*] It is very sweet, no doubt,

to hear those words of reproach that you have inflicted upon my ears, from one of whom I've always thought so well The happiness of pleasing you was always my highest study, and my heart all its warmth in serving a good woman that for years has been to me as a mother; but by your leave, this heart presumes still to have doubts of its own awakening. I may have imagined under the influence of a dream, and if I must speak candidly to you, I shall trust kind words in return. My conscience has assured me of the sincerity of what you have said; and fixed in my heart is a firm belief that if I heard what I expressed, that my French blood could not restrain my hands from strangling the Englishman, while on his knees. Yet, it seems that I saw him and heard him say, "Among your many friends, I wish to be the nearest to your heart." But if he had said so, I would have choked him. Yet, I thought I heard him say, "I mean no offense, but believe me, when the heart is consumed with a noble flame, one may, without shame, make a candid avowal of it." But don't it seem that if I had heard him say such words, that he'd die? I thought I heard him say: "I may be allowed this freedom, seeing that my heart's choice warrants it;" and the queen replied, "you must not promise too much." I could not have remained and hear the queen thus insulted. It must all have been a dream. Again I thought I heard him say: "It is because you do not enter into the feeling of a heart too full, alas of tender passion," and the queen replied in a tone that carried with it the import of true virtue, with a will of firm determination: "Go! leave me!" Good Lord, could I have remained as a cowardly thief in that closet, and have heard her Majesty thus insulted and not offer resistance! No! not I. I would die first.

COUN. Richelieu was never accused of base cowardice. It must have been all a dream.

KING. Yes all a dream.

ROH. A nightmare.

ANNE, But why were you in the closet?

KING. Yes, why were you in her Majesty's closet?

R [illegible] — I—

COUN. "— I—;" go on and tell why you were in there stowed away like a moth.

VER. Cardinal, an explanation is in order!

RICH. What I did was from a conscientious motive.

COUN. Oh! I dare say!

RICH. You never preserve moderation in anything. You should distinguish between real virtue and its counterfeit, and never bestow your wrath so hastily; and never attack true piety. We live in an age in which violence makes matters worse.

ROH. Human nature is liable, at times, to create false suspicions, and good is often construed into evil.

RICH. [*Turning to Marie de Rohan and bowing, taking her by the hand.*] I implore heaven to be propitious enough to enable me one day to acknowledge this generous service.

COUN. [*To the queen.*] How irreverently this hypocrite uses the name of heaven, his cardinal robes cover all that is sacred.

ANNE We live under a God, whom all arts of hypocrites cannot deceive. He bestows lasting glory on his children of worth; and his love for sincerity does not close his heart to the horror which falsehood must inspire.

RICH. But since you will not credit anything I say, I can not satisfy you. If my explanation offends, so much the worse for those who force me to it.

ANNE. Then let the worst come to the one that has done wrong.

RICH. Do not hurry for fear of being mistaken.

ANNE. Tell the king why you were in my closet?

RICH. Gently! gently! You are too eager. Do you wish to victimize me?

ANNE. Were you there by the king's command?

RICH. No! most sympathetically no!

KING. Well then—

RICH. I tell you this is all a dream! [*The ladies all laughing*] I am in truth all in confusion, and this is no laughing matter.

ANNE. For once I agree with you.

RICH. It is all a dream! It is all a dream!

ANNE. Did you walk into my closet while under the influence of a dream?

KING. That is the question.

RICH. Good heavens! Can I find no shelter from your pursuit?

ANNE. But how can you explain and tell the truth without offending that heaven of which you are always speaking?

RICH. If it be nothing but heaven that opposes the expression of the truth, it is a trifle for me to remove such an obstacle; and that need be no restraint upon my conscience.

ANNE. Then explain.

RICH. Heaven, it is true, that pleasure forbids certain gratification.

ANNE. And you are—

RICH. Pardon me your Majesty, there is a science which loosens that which binds one's conscience, and which rectifies the evil of the act with purity of our intentions.

KING. Then explain! [*To Richelieu.*] explain!

ANNE. Yes, explain!

RICH. I tell your Majesty it is all a dream!

All the ladies, laughing. It is all a dream!

BEL. The ghost! the ghost!

KING. Why came thee here Princess de Galilleo! thy self-murdered lovable maiden of a century ago. Be thou a ghost White Lady, cursed by thy own hand, avenger of no wrong! Sent by heaven, and saved from hell! Answer me. Why come thou here each June? Where in

this castle is thy sepulcher? And why do thou roam through these halls, and frighten this virtuous queen? Speak thou, murderess of thy own blood. [*Ghost beckons the king and points in the opposite direction*]

RICH. It beckons you to its sepulcher. Go with it good Louis and learn of its toomb.

ROH. Yes, sire; nothing will harm a king!

KING. Go, good Cardinal, you are a Godly man. Go Cardinal, you are always ready to meet your Lord. If it be an evil spirit, it won't dare harm a cardinal; if it be a good ghost you will be safe. In any event, heaven will direct your steps and protect you.

GHOST. Come Cardinal duke that I may cleanse thy blackened soul; separate thy spirit from thy lecherous body. strip thy hypocrisy from thy wit, and expose thy shameful lust, and teach thee to honor the virtuous queen; to serve thy God, as well as thou effect to serve the king! I'll show thee that thy lustful orgies shall seek not gratification, but subjection. Thou art not too old to be saved.

For five score years I've walked these halls—and beneath its roof in my secret toomb. [*Holding up a cup.*] From this wooden cup I poured the cursed poison that destroyed everything but my soul; thus was I destroyed by my own hand. As you Louis is now destroying the life of your virtuous queen.

KING. Go away ghost!

GHOST. Not till the Cardinal-duke swear he'll obey. [*Ghost approaches.*]

ALL. The ghost! the ghost!

CURTAIN.

Act III.

SCENE. *Garden of Amiens.*

Lord Holland and the Duchess de Chevreuse discovered plucking roses.

HOL. It is ethically appropriate that the ball should

have opened by Buckingham leading forth Anne of Austria.

DUCH. Imagine how jealous King Louis would be, had he been the stately galliard, his noble and graceful form shone with ineffable splendor.

HOL. A notable contrast from Louis.

DUCH. This is the first time I ever walked from a ball.

HOL. And you seem to enjoy it; the night is so beautiful.

DUCH. Buckingham's high-bred carriage admirably sustained all his magnificence of attire. His "sweet and accostable manner" doubtless so enhanced the dazzling effect of his exterior attractions as to render him irresistible to the young queen.

HOL. Do you think she loves him?

DUCH. Loves the Duke of Buckingham? What do you suppose he secured my good offices for? Certainly not to educate a young and inexperienced queen to hate his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham.

HOL. Then he will succeed. Yet, such succe s is dangerous The king may cause trouble. It is no small matter to win the affections of another man's wife.

DUCH. [*Looking back*] The queen and his Grace walk slowly, their eyes on the ground, as though conversing privately.

HOL. Buckingham is fearless of danger.

DUCH. You should have seen them when they first met.

HOL. He appeared gallant, did he not?

DUCH. He preserved a dignified, yet royal silence. But the beauty of the young queen fascinated him.

[*Slowly walking, exeunt R., passing round picking flowers in rear of garden.*]

Enter L., DUKE DE CHEVREUSE *and* MARIE DE MEDICI, R.

CHEV. Your Majesty don't seem interested in honoring the young queen?

MED. My son should never have married her. I op-

posed the alliance then; I hate her now; but I must appear as a dutiful queen-mother.

CHEV. It is said Queen Anne has many lovers?

MED. The grave Cardinal cherished a mad passion for the queen.

CHEV. And does she reciprocate his affections?

MED. She hates him. But she loves Buckingham.

CHEV. I say to you as queen-mother that his morals hang loosely as his diamonds

MED. So much the better. I want to gratify her Majesty's desires, and associate her with high-bred courtiers, that will the sooner ensure her separation from the king.

CHEV. Does she enjoy the splendor and importance of her position as queen-consort?

MED. True, but she is accustomed to royalty.

CHEV. His Grace found a genial abettor in the queen's favorite, the beautiful Marie de Rohan.

[*Exeunt to* R., *passing round and seen in rear garden with others.*

Enter EARL *of* CARLISLE *and* MARIE DE ROHAN.

EARL. The queen seems in love with his Grace.

ROHAN. Yes, she told me that he is the hero of her imagination.

EARL. His Grace has brought all his fascinating charms into play.

ROHAN. To me may be attributed his Grace's success.

EARL. Her estrangement from her consort and her persecution by the queen-mother and Richelieu may have operated to produce much of that wilfulness and rashness of conduct.

ROHAN. She long since imbibed the idea of platonic attachment.

EARL. Louis's court ladies are not calculated to protect the virtue of the young queen.

ROH. We would be otherwise if she pleased the king.

[*Exeunt to* R., *passing back to rear of garden*

Enter ANNE *of Austria and the* DUKE *of Buckingham.*

BUC. Then your Majesty assures me that I may hope.

ANNE. [*Glancing at his face, and smiling.*] You will be content to hope?

BUC. Hope is a beautiful word.

ANNE. Have you forgotten the words in the Good Book: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God."

BUC. Is that what you want me to understand?

ANNE. Truly; and no more. [*Stepping back.*] I am Anne of Austria; I yield to no man but the king!

BUC. An honorable declaration; just what I had reason to expect from your royal highness.

ANNE. Then ask not of me your hopes.

BUC. Calm yourself. I was speaking only of platonic attachments.

ANNE. And why even of platonic love?

BUC. Because of your estrangement from the king.

ANNE. If true, I should be more cautious, and more prudent to keep from the allurements that which have been woven about me by people of court, who are supposed to be my protectors.

BUC. Do you not desire to subdue the hearts of those you love?

ANNE. I supposed I accomplished that desire when I married the king.

BUC. I had reason to believe that you had an affection for him.

ANNE. Possibly ladies of my court so informed you. I am not unaware that mischief-making and intrigue are to them as the air they breathe.

BUC. It is unfortunate.

ANNE. Yes, unfortunate, that I have not a word to say in selecting the ladies of my court.

BUC. Very unfortunate.

ANNE. I am watched as a hawk. I have grown weary of these guarded demonstrations.

BUC. My only intention is to show the tender yet chiv-

alrous interest I entertain for you.

ANNE. The tribute which you pay to nature does too much injury to the rank you hold; and I must therefore decline to accept its touching favors,

BUC Do not permit caution to sway your judgment, and destroy the pleasure that this meeting may give us.

ANNE. Then cease to hope for pleasures, which, coming from my heart, show weakness.

BUC. Oh! your Majesty! let my eyes indulge in my heart's delight, and brave all the consequences to which fate may expose us. [*On his knees.*] Let our lives yield to the destinies that fate shall produce.

ANNE. Seek a better cause for the consolation which your heart offers to me; and do not make a weapon of the fallacy of your argument.

BUC. Let me at least allow my words—

ANNE. No! my just despair does not know how to restrain itself.

BUC. Let me indulge my affection for you.

ANNE. No! I already feel the loss which I have sustained.

BUC. Give me your love, or I'll bewail what the whole universe cannot make good to me.

ANNE. Excuse me, [*Walking away from him*] but I have given that to the king.

BUC. [*Reaching out, taking her hands.*] I must have some token of hope

ANNE. [*Gently disengaging her hands.*] Though I may love you to the depths of my heart, we must think of the proprieties due to honor and our respective stations in life.

BUC. Proprieties! to the winds! [*Releasing her hands.*]

ANNE. Well, you know what the world would say. Every eye in the court and the castle is on me. I am a subject of suspicion, ever watched by a jealous husband and an envious queen-mother.

BUC. Because you are not independent.

ANNE. An independent queen! Who ever heard of such a queen?

BUC. Then how can I restrain my love?

ANNE. I regret that I am an object whose crime it is to possess too many charms.

BUC. Let your charms hold themselves in readiness to receive here the new triumph of my conquest.

ANNE. I do not think my conduct the cause of so frank an expression of your passion.

BUC. I cannot restrain the truth.

ANNE. Then I shall be compelled to incur your displeasure, as I cannot submit to your love.

BUC. You deserve the affection of a man who can reciprocate your affection.

ANNE. I thank you for favoring me with the honor of your confidence. [*Making a low bow.*]

BUC I am not seeking to tempt you by allurements; only to express my love.

ANNE. [*Moving her hands.*] I will not listen to your temptations.

BUC. I have no motives but what are actuated by an honorable passion for you.

ANNE. I shall strive to merit respect from all the world.

BUC, I want to serve you!

ANNE. No, that cannot be. Though you may be enchanted by what you term my charms, you must forget that we ever met.

BUC. You may as well command the sun to stand still in the meridian, as to ask me to forget you.

ANNE. I fear you have courted too many hearts, to idealize one.

BUC. [*On one knee, in a beseeching way.*] Where is there a lover, so anxious to please? One who is your captive, and ever ready to bow to your will.

ANNE. Were I a princess again, and ready to choose amongst all the monarchs and dukes of the world, I would

select one who bears the highest marks of nobleness.

BUC. Then I would again not meet your favor, [*arising.*]

ANNE. My choice would be within my reach. I would climb to the summit of a mountain and exclaim to the world that my choice is his Grace the Duke of Buckingham.

BUC, [*Going to her, taking her hands.*] Believe me, your Majesty, to find one's self favored beyond one's hopes, is a happiness which makes one wretched.

ANNE. Wretched!

BUC. Wretched! because when one fears he can never attain such a gift.

ANNE. To have a lover of exalted worth, and to see one's self dearly beloved by him, is a happiness that an ill-fated queen may envy.

BUC Let me find the means of breaking your union with the king. As you had no voice in the contract, you did not consent, and without your consent there could be no marriage.

ANNE. Speak not thus.

BUC. Unsatisfied passions are what drives a man mad!

ANNE. In vain for you ever to hope for more.

BUC. Shall I be compelled to hide within my breast, that invisible something that always burns?

ANNE. Your Excellency must now go, and tomorrow, if I can, you shall see me more happy.

BUC. I will swear to you that I have no other delight than to see you happy.

ANNE. [*Laughing.*] You conceive no other wish than to mould my devotion to your desire.

BUC. [*Going toward her.*] How comes it that a cloud seems to dim your eyes?

ANNE. Because I can not concede your indulgence.

BUC. Do you refuse the love I offer you?

ANNE. You are aware of my incumbrance.

BUC. I shall hope for more sighs of love than of grief.

ANNE. I fear your hopes are all in vain.

BUC. When the passion of two hearts is the same, have they different throbs? And when one loves sincerely, and beholds the object of his love, can he think of marriage ties?

ANNE. It is that which afflicts me.

BUC. How little do you know of a heart entirely yours!

ANNE. Perhaps, knowing it, I am in danger of incurring your displeasure.

BUC. Do you pretend to know how absolute your enchantment is over me? If you doubt it, be deceived.

ANNE. [*Her hand upward.*] I am within the king's commands.

BUC. I hold myself in readiness for your commands. If to convince you of my sincerity, I swear, I swear by your lovely eyes, those masters of my soul; those divine authors of my love, that I will be true to you. This being the last time I can meet you in private, permit me to embrace you. [*Placing his arms about her.*]

ANNE. [*Struggling.*] Help! help! Bellario, where are you?

Enter BELLARIO *and* COUNTESS LANNOI.

BEL. [*Drawing his sword.*] Here! how dare you! [*The same moment the Duke discovers Bellario coming and lets the queen loose.*]

BUC. [*Drawing his sword.*] I meant no harm to the queen.

[*They fence and fight.*]

Enter HOLLAND, C., *running.*

HOL. Stop this! Have your Grace forgotten yourself? The Minister of England fighting a French Equerry!

COUN. [*To the Duke.*] It is not our custom to act as you are doing.

BUC. Madame, I am not a Frenchman. Neither am I bound by your laws.

Enter MADAME DE VERNAY, C.

VER. If you do not quit our presence, I'll have the

equerry run his sword through you.

BUC. I am madly in love with the queen.

VER. Your action is louder than your words.

ANNE. Your Grace should blush with shame.

VER. King Charles made an unfortunate selection when he sent you to safely conduct Henrietta, the young bride, to him.

ANNE. I insist on your quitting my presence. Leave France immediately.

BEL. [*Advancing.*] It is my duty to kill you

ANNE. [*Running between them.*] Duke, retire, lest you compromise me!

BUC. Shall I run as a coward?

ANNE. Yes, or as a villain.

[*Exit* BUCKINGHAM.

ANNE. [*Turning to Bellario and Madame de Varney.*] I blame you for having quitted me.

Enter EARL OF KINGSTON, C.

EARL. [*To Bellario.*] I say, Chappie! Couldn't you protect the queen?

BEL. I did protect her Majesty.

EARL. Good! I knew you to be noble fellow. If I were here I would have killed the Duke, though he be my friend.

VER. What a noble Earl!

EARL. I am an unappreciated genius.

BEL. Gracious!

EARL. I would have killed him. [*Drawing his cane to Bellario.*] I say—Chappie, I say! which way did Buckingham go? I will at least cane him for I am able.

[*Exit* EARL.

Re-enter DUCHESS DE CHEVREUSE.

DUCH. What is the matter?

ANNE. [*Turning quickly.*] Oh, nothing. The Duke of Buckingham had suddenly left me alone; and I was terrified on finding myself in so unusual a position.

DUCH. Without considering the alarm which such an

act would necessarily occasion, you cried aloud.

BEL. Aloud! in order to summon me to her presence. How unthoughtful in me to drop so far behind.

VER. Talking love to me.

BEL. Hearing your sweet words.

HOL. I am surprised that his Grace should be so careless of a royal charge.

ANNE. Possibly my fault. I stepped aside to pick a rose. [*Looking about.*] I thought I had one in my hand when I cried aloud.

DUCH. Where is Buckingham?

VER. [*Looking with pleasing expression.*] I think he is gone to find the rose her highness lost.

BEL. Gallant Duke, that failed to respond to the queen's cry of distress!

VER. If I should be lost in this great garden and cry for help, you [*to Bellario*] would come?

BEL. Yes, my dear madame; but I am a Frenchman.

DUCH. Perhaps his Grace thought the cry was caused by the coming of the king?

ANNE. Then he should await his coming.

VER. Buckingham has had some experience with the coming of husbands.

BEL. [*Forgetting.*] I would have killed him.

ANNE. [*Surprised.*] What is that you say?

[*All surprised.*]

BEL I would have killed any one who would harm your Majesty.

[*Exit* QUEEN *and* COUNTESS.

HOL. [*Angrily.*] It is your duty to remain with her Majesty.

DUCH. If the Duke had stayed with you! [*Knowing wink*] you would have been safe.

DUCH. I was with a pleasure party walking on the bank of the Loire; it was about this time in the evening. By chance the model Duke and I dropped back, and I—

BEL. What did you do?

DUCH. I screamed just like her Majesty did.

HOL. Indeed!

DUCH. Indeed, I did.

HOL. Were you not safe?

DUCH. Sure!

BEL. Why did you scream?

DUCH. Because I was so safe I couldn't get loose.

HOL. Then how were you safe?

DUCH. Safe within the arms of the Duke of Buckingham.

BEL. Is he thus afflicted?

DUCH What do you mean?

BEL. [*Blank look at the ground.*] I forget.

HOL. Afflicted with cramps in his arms, your Majesty; cramps in his arms. [*Laughing.*]

DUCH. The cramps are dangerous when there are only two together, but not of a kind.

Enter COUNTESS OF LANNOI.

COUN. I saw her Majesty struggling in the arms of the Duke of Buckingham. I ran to your assistance.

COUN. The brave Bellario put him to flight. I do believe he is still running.

HOL. Your Majesty must have been excited.

COUN. The Duke acknowledged no fear, he recognized no peril; his soul was absorbed in one passion, and he deemed no sacrifice too great to insure his success.

DUCH. It was but the Duke's expression of passionate attachment for you.

COUN. Her Majesty is susceptible of tenderness for the man who adores her, but it must be owned that her love for purity and propriety prevailed.

HOL. She knew that she could not listen to the importunity of his fervent suit without sharing morally in its guilt.

DUCH. And that cry? her Majesty exhibited her wisdom, preferring unsullied innocence and self-respect rather than to yield to the suggestions of fear which first pos-

sessed her, lest her cry of distress, coming to the ears of the king, might cost her much sorrow.

EARL What is the matter, Bellario?

BEL. How can I excuse myself to the king for not running my sword through Buckingham!

HOL. Just tell his Majesty that as the party was returning by moonlight from the banquet and ball, to their lodging by the Somme, the hour being yet early, the fresh air of a balmy night invited a stroll among the fragrant garden shrubberies before retiring; that being satisfied that her Majesty was old enough to take care of herself; you took Madame de Vernay in a ramble by the river side that you had just placed your arm about the madame, when you heard her Majesty cry aloud; you ran and was at your place of duty ere any harm befell her Majesty.

[*Exit* DUKE DE CHEVREUSE.

VER. How dare you suggest such an act of impropriety on my part?

HOL. Because what I say is true, madame.

VER. Did you see the equerry's arm about my waist?

HOL. I did, madame. If I thought the act unusual, I would not have mentioned it. Do you deny it?

VER. Certainly not; being that you know.

HOL. Well?

VER. Do you deny that at the same moment, behind that trellis-work, that you kissed and embraced the Duchess de Chevreuse?

HOL. Hush! woman, her husband will hear you! Certainly I do not deny, [*low voice*] being that you know.

VER. I have been a lady-in-waiting for many years and this is the first time I ever heard it intimated that a little kissing and hugging is objectionable.

HOL. It is rather expected of us in England.

VER. It is not so bad here in France. But it is not mentioned, and ofttimes encouraged. [*Turning quickly.*] Do you see that tall elm tree.

HOL. Yes, excuse me, I will return in a moment,

[*Exit* LORD HOLLAND.

VER. [*addressing the others.*] Some years ago I saw a French equerry embrace and kiss an English countess, beneath that tree.

Enter Lord Holland and the queen

HOL. Your Majesty, the Duke of Buckingham desires to make an apology, for his conduct, which he fears you may construe as an act of rudeness.

ANNE. I will grant his request.

HOL. He asks that the interview be private.

COUN. [*The old lady of honor.*] I cannot consent.

BEL. I shall see that her Majesty shall never again have reason to find fault with my lack of duty.

HOL. Well, in your presence, but not in your hearing.

COUN. We will retire, but remain in sight.

[*Exeunt all but the* QUEEN.

Enter BUCKNIGHAM.

BUC. [*Dropping on one knee, kissing the hand of the queen.*] Your Majesty cannot conceive my humiliation. My love for you knows no restraint.

ANNE. Hush! your expressions of love are too impassioned.

BUC. It is but the uncontrollable flow of nature. Shall I hope?

ANNE. My greatest hope is in your heart.

BUC. As for my heart, you may be assured of that. Sigh no more; lest I cause to be suspected of more tenderness than becomes man.

ANNE. I cannot but be happy, when I have your support. I wish I were a peasant's daughter, and you a shepherd's son.

BUC. I wish it were thus.

ANNE. I am going to try everything to see our sweetest wishes fulfilled, and if all my efforts do not make me yours, there exists a retreat where the soul can fly to.

BUC. May a just heaven forbid that I should ever receive such a proof of your affections!

ANNE. You speak softly, but you do not know how

your presence endangers me. I am fond of tranquility; a terrible tempest rages within me. I have a presentiment that the jealousy of the king will induce him and Richelieu to come tonight In such an event I do not know where I could hide you.

BUC. Come, this is mere fright. His Majesty's power over you is based only on your weakness.

ANNE. I know but little of the outside world. I have been raised as a flower.

BUC. You have beauty of soul which time cannot reap It inspires me with love; the thought to which my wishes shall ever tend.

ANNE. I understand you. I am not willing to yield.

BUC. Your charms possess my whole heart!

ANNE. Marriage establishes such sacred rights, that sooner than burn the flame of another passion, one should lose one's life.

BUC. Do you regard it wrong, to do what the pride of your heart has commanded you? I only obey its commands.

ANNE. All your attentions and affections avail nothing with me.

BUC. Give me, then, some pledge of your regard—some object which has once been yours, to satisfy me that I have not been indulging in a dream—something that you have once worn, and that I may wear; a ring, a bracelet, or a chain!

ANNE. And will you go?

BUC. Yes.

ANNE. Immediately?

BUC. Yes.

ANNE You will quit France?

BUC. Yes, I swear I will.

ANNE. [*Looking back while unfastening the shoulder-knot*] Here! here! keep this as a memorial of me.

BUC. [*Sinking upon his knees.*]

ANNE. You promised me to go.

BUC. I take it, but regret it is not something which can be worn over the heart.

ANNE. Leave France immediately. You will compromise me, and it may cost you your life. Go at once.

BUC. And I will keep my word! Your hand, madame, and I leave you. [*Turning her head in the opposite direction, extending her hand; Buckingham presses his lips passionately to her hand.*] I will return again and see you. How can I leave you?

ANNE. Go, I say! the Queen of France cannot fly.

BUC. Can I see you no more?

ANNE. Now go! We are suspected. Bellario will inform Richelieu, and he will have you murdered. [*Looking back.*] It is the Countess de Lannoi's duty always to remain with me. She is the confidante of the king, and she is zealous in his service. Go, go, I say!

BUC. I can't leave you.

ANNE. Go, or in self-preservation I will call the Countess and Bellario.

BUC. [*Kissing her hand.*] Good-bye, my love. I leave my heart with you.

ANNE. [*Surprised.*] What! shedding tears?

BUC. Tears, the melting effusions of my mind, the burning heat of my passions.

ANNE. Now go! follow this large road down to the river side, then turn to the left.

BUC. Adieu! [*Kissing her hand.*]

[*Exit* DUKE, L.

[*Exit* QUEEN, R.

Enter the DUKE *of Chevreuse and* MARIE DE MEDICI.

CHEV. [*To de Medici.*] This conduct is not calculated to win the affections of the king.

MED. As queen-mother I shall do nothing to soothe the estrangement existing between the royal pair.

CHEV. The queen regards her English lover with no impartial eyes.

MED. Nothing criminal.

CHEV. That attachment, at least of mind, which appears so lovely and is so dangerous, seems to have been encouraged by the queen.

[*The sound of horses hoofs approaching.*]

MED. What means this midnight coming of horses?

BEL 'Tis now past that hour!

HOL. Coming [*all looking in one direction*] this way.

Enter the QUEEN.

MED. Great heavens! how unfortunate.

ANNE. Nay, answer; [*rising who is it?*]

BEL It is Richelieu and the king.

ANNE. What, the king!

ALL. Long live the king!!

Enter the king and Richelieu riding two large black horses, saddles and bridles trimmed in gold.

CURTAIN.

Act IV.

SCENE I.—*In the Louvre.*

[*King Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu discovered, the king standing by a mantel, the Cardinal sitting by a table.*]

KING. You have no faith in my assurance of the queen's innocence.

RICH. None whatever. I am not inclined to give the queen any credit for the preservation of a virtue which is dependent upon the watchfulness of those by whom she is surrounded.

KING. How did your Eminence learn that Anne of Austria gave the shoulder-knot to Buckingham?

RICH. Your Majesty has forgotten that the Countess Lannoi, my zealous spy, always keeps her eye on the queen. After the return of the royal suite from the garden of Amiens, and being informed by the Countess of the gift to Buckingham, I instructed the Countess to inform

her Majesty that a diamond shoulder-knot was missing from the small rosewood casket, and to watch the effect of the question on her Majesty's countenance.

KING. Well! then did she inquire of her Majesty?

RICH. The Countess went immediately to her Majesty's room, and informed her of the loss of the diamond shoulder-knot, which her Majesty recently presented to her.

KING. Well, then! what was the effect on the queen?

RICH. Her Majesty appeared uneasy at the news, calmed herself, and as if starting with much surprise, she exclaimed: "Ah! I have it; in awkwardly handling the shoulder-knot, the evening before, I broke one of the studs. I sent it to the jeweler's to be repaired.

KING. Did your Eminence send to the jeweler to ascertain whether that is true or not?

RICH. I did, your Majesty.

KING. Well! and the goldsmith—

RICH. The goldsmith had heard nothing about it.

KING. Good! I have no doubt but that the genius of your Eminence—

RICH. Discovers all the follies of the queen.

KING. It was just what I was about to say.

RICH. I have also learned that the Duchess de Chevreuse has escaped from Tours, and the vigilance of the police. If she is here she will be intriguing for Buckingham, and intermediator between Buckingham and the queen.

KING. Possibly that is the reason which caused Buckingham to stop at the Duchess's house.

RICH. Every move by Buckingham is actuated by a motive.

KING. Your Eminence must analyze his motives.

RICH. Before you exiled the Duchess to Tours, the Duchess and Marie de Rohan were together more than usual. They were seemingly more friendly and companionable than ever before.

KING. An association made harmonious by English gold.

RICH. The joint association of Rohan and the Duchess would make the access of Buckingham to the apartments of the queen a matter of ease.

KING. I have been informed that the Duchess de Chevreuse and the Duke of Buckingham were seen together in the palace.

RICH. I have no positive information upon that point.

KING. Do you think Anne of Austria loves me?

RICH. She loves you not.

KING. I feel that I am in her affections.

RICH. Love offers naught but what is agreeable; but it drags horrible troubles after it; and if you wish to pass your days in peace, ever defend yourself from its darts, as from evil.

KING. Your suspicions may not be justified. Oh! you wise cardinal!

RICH. When Madame de Lannoi discovered the disappearance of the diamond shoulder-knot from the queen's casket, I lost not an instant in writing to one of the ladies of Charles's court, who is in my interest, offering to present her with fifty thousand livres if she should succeed in cutting away a couple of the tags of the shoulder-knot, the first time that Buckingham appeared with it in public, and forward them forthwith by a safe messenger to me.

KING. [*Anxious.*] And your success?

RICH A fortnight afterwards the two tags were in my possession. The Duke had worn the shoulder-knot at a state ball, and my emissary had cut away a couple of its pendants unobserved, and [*opening a small case from under his coat*] here they are! [*Gloating laugh.*]

KING. Thoughtful Cardinal! [*examining the diamonds.*] The same that I gave the queen so recently. How quickly she forgot my goodness.

RICH. The queen is within our toils, your Majesty.

KING. What will we do to prove her disloyalty?

RICH. [*Calmly rubbing his hands.*] Expose her, gently, gently!

KING. In what way?

RICH. Any way, so it will be gentle and nice.

KING. You are my adviser. It is for you to say.

RICH. It being her first offence, (I mean that we are sure of) I suggest that you give a grand ball tomorrow night. That will be too short a time to send to England for the jewels, and on the rise of the sun tomorrow morning you inform the queen that she must attend the ball in court costume wearing the shoulder-knot.

KING. A grand ball of giddiness, which attracts but to destroy; what fascination dwells within its whirl. [*Stopping short, as if by another idea.*] And if she appears without them, what then?

RICH. [*Rubbing his hands.*] Expose her! expose her gently! before all the public at the ball. Oh, this will be so gentle!

KING. I will inform the queen that a ball, given by the civil magistrates at the town-hall, will take place tomorrow night; and I will request her that, in order to compliment both myself and the magistrates, she shall appear wearing the shoulder-knot which I lately presented her.

RICH. Capital, your Majesty, I could not suggest any better; capital! You have it right. [*Aside.*] Eight and forty hours, which are yet to intervene before vengeance can be accomplished, are seemingly a century to me. Anne of Austria will be in my toils.

KING. The queen may be possessed of the power to defeat your ingenuity.

RICH. No, never; she stands alone. She has not the time, nor the opportunity, to re-possess herself of the jewels.

KING. But Buckingham is in Havre.

Enter MARIE DE MEDICI.

MED. Your Majesty must not forget the conduct of his Grace, the Duke of Buckingham at the masked ball at the

Hotel de Chevreuse.

KING. I do not forget my virtuous mother. But I cannot believe my wife is in love with a loathed enemy.

MED. The salient topic of court gossip on the following day was the various disguises assumed by Buckingham during the festivities at the Hotel de Chevreuse.

RICH. It aroused my suspicions and doubled my vigilance; I readily guessed that the intriguing Duchess was the confidante and accomplice of his Grace's mad passion.

MED. Your vigilant surveillance rendered the Duke's approach so difficult that he resolved to attempt other means of seeing the queen once at least in private.

KING. Were you aware of this at the time?

MED. Not until after his departure.

RCH. Surely not; the good mother would have frustrated his attempt.

MED. I learn that at a time subsequent to the ball the queen was to introduce him into her apartments in the garb of a monk.

RICH. Here isa piece of strategy after the Duchess's own heart.

MED. Through the expert agency of the Duchess de Chevreuse this wild scheme may be actually accomplished. I have told you of the unfortunate scene that occurred in the garden in Amiens.

KING. [*Horrified*] Mother!

RICH. Your virtuous mother tells the truth.

Enter Countess of Lannoi.

COUN. Yes, your virtuous mother tells the truth.

KING. [*In great rage.*] What did I have you there for? A lady of honor to the queen should ever be with her.

COUN. I was not out of her sight. Your Majesty accuses me wrongfully.

KING. Quick! go on! tell me all.

MED. His Grace as a monk had scarcely been closeted with the queen five minutes, ere an alarm was raised of

the approach of Louis the Just, and the Duke was forced to beat a rapid retreat.

RICH. His religious garb did not conceal his identity in departing.

KING. I had no suspicions. I placed firm faith in the man's being a monk. He appears as England's prince minister as a ghost, and as a monk. Will he appear next as a goat?

RICH. I was not so easily deceived, I discovered that the advent of the monk was only another device of the Duchess to aid Buckingham in accomplishing his purpose.

KING. And what then?

RICH. [*To the king.*] The queen was saved.

COUN. And by my vigilance! I innocently thought the monk was the White Lady in disguise. If I had supposed the intruder was none other than the Duke of Buckingham, the garden scene in Amiens would never have happened.

MED. Nothing unpardonable happened in the garden.

RICH. No, nothing but the levy of the queen and the audacity of Buckingham that reached a climax. [*Chuckling laugh*]

MED. The garden in Amiens was found to be a delightful exchange for the dull and formal restrictions in the halls of this p lace.

RICH. No excuse, no excuse!

COUN. After the rich banquet at Amiens, the ball was opened by Buckingham leading forth the queen. His noble and graceful form shone with ineffable splendor.

KING. Ineffable splendor! ineffable splendor! all the court ladies, even a woman like you, old enough to be his grandmother, is boasting of his beauty.

RICH. I am informed that he was girded for conquest in his famous white suit of "uncut velvet."

MED. True; literally blazing with diamonds.

COUN. Over which he wore the collars and badges of the Garter, St. Esprit, the Golden Fleece, and the order of

St George.

KING. [*Inraged*] Why torture me thus?

MED. His "sweet and accostable manners"—

COUN. So enhanced the dazzling effect of his exterior attractiveness as to render him irresistible with each one with whom he "trod a measure."

KING. Did Anne of Austria fail to resist him?

MED. She did, my son; though he had shown her the tender yet chivalrous interest of an adventurous and high-minded lover.

KING. [*Pu'ling his hair.*] A lover! did I understand my virtuous mother to say that the Duke of Buckingham is my consort's high-minded lover? Anne of Austria, my wife, France's queen, has the Duke of Buckingham, the mutton-chop Englishman, for a lover. And this information brought to me by my own virtuous mother, Marie de Medici. Impossible!

MED. Your Majesty! [*In great rage.*]

KING I want to hear no more. I want to hear no more!

COUN. I—

KING. You,—why did you not remain with the queen?

COUN. Lord Holland and the Duke de Chevreuse took their way by the queen and Buckingham. The equerry, Madame de Vernay and myself kept our seats from a feeling of delicacy toward our royal mistress. When we saw Buckingham lead her royal highness to the right by a high trellis-work, and Lord Holland turned to the left in a dividing walk, they all disappeared, and we all ran, and had barely started when we heard the virtuous queen cry aloud. Bellario, the equerry would have run his sword through Buckingham; but, though he deserved death, her royal highness spared his life.

MED. True, your Majesty; the queen was agitated. She blamed Bellario and Madame de Vernay for having quitted her.

RICH. Last night the queen was up very late.

KING. That confirms it! writing to Buckingham. Cardinal, I must have her letters.

RICH. But how are we to get them, sire?

KING. Ransack her chests, and if necessary search her person.

RICH. No, not the august spouse of your Majesty Anne of Austria, Queen of France.

KING. I tell you she loves the Duke of Buckingham! Why did I not arrest him while he was here in Paris?

RICH. Arrest the Duke! arrest the prime minister of Charles I! Think, sire,—what a horrible scandal!

KING. But if he exposes himself to it—

RICH. Never, sire! that would not do.

KING. It was to the Duke the queen was writing all night! Cardinal, I must have those letters.

RICH. Sire, and yet—

KING. Cardinal, at whatever cost, I must have them.

RICH. I would observe to your Majesty, however—

KING. Are you in league with the Englishman, Madame de Chevreuse and the queen?

RICH. Sire, I thought myself far removed from suspicion.

KING. I will have those letters.

RICH. There can be only one way.

KING. What is that?

RICH. The keeper of the seals, with your commission. This matter wholly belongs to his office.

KING. Let him be sent for immediately.

RICH. I will attend to that.

KING. Let him [*in anger*] be sent for instantly.

RICH. Your Majesty's order shall be executed, but—

KING. But what?

RICH. But the queen may perhaps refuse to obey.

KING. The order of the king!

RICH. Your Majesty will not forget that I have done all I could to prevent a rupture.

KING. O God! were I happy, and could love the queen,

ah, how ambitious I would be.

RICH. The substance of ambition is merely the veil of a dream.

KING. It is the veil, that hides beneath the veil. [*Turning quickly*] Now send for the chancellor, and the queen.

Enter CHANCELLOR.

CHAN. [*Bowing.*] Sire, I am at your service.

KING. Write a royal edict, consigning Anne of Austria to a convent, to remain there during the pleasure of the king!

Eater ANNE *of* AUSTRIA.

ANNE. Sire, what is this I hear?

[*Chancellor writing.*]

KING. I have ordered the chancellor to prepare a royal edict assigning you to a convent there to remain at the pleasure of the king!

CHAN. Sire, the decree is ready for your royal signature.

ANNE. [*Appealingly.*] Great heavens!

KING. [*Signs the paper, gives it to the chancellor, who looks at the signature.*]

ANNE. [*Springs forward, grabs the paper, tears it into pieces*] I defy the king of France! I am Anne of Austria! [*Throwing up her arms.*]

CURTAIN.

[*Quick change.*]

SCENE II. *Private apartments of the queen. Queen Anne of Austria discovered.*

ANNE. [*Looking over the jewels*] Jewels from many friends. I am queen of many hearts and empress of many souls.

Enter BELLARIO.

BEL. The king.

Enter the KING.

KING. Madame, there will be a ball at the city hall.

I desire that, to honor our worthy magistrates, you will be present in full dress, and be adorned by the shoulder-knot of diamonds which I recently gave you on your birth-day.

ANNE. [*Surprised, gazing at the king with terrified eyes.*] Yes, sire.

KING. You will be present at this ball?

ANNE. Yes.

KING. Wearing the diamond shoulder-knot?

ANNE. Yes, sire

KING. This is the only purpose of my visit. [*About to retire.*]

ANNE. Sire, on what day will this ball take place?

KING. On tomorrow night, if it pleases the Cardinal.

ANNE. The Cardinal. Do you consult him about balls?

KING. I will ask the Cardinal about it.

ANNE. It was the Cardinal, then, who suggested to give this entertainment?

KING. The Cardinal.

ANNE. And was it he who told you to require me to appear wearing the diamond shoulder-knot?

KING. That is to say, madame—

ANNE. It was he, sire, it was he!

KING. Well, what does it signify, whether it was the Cardinal or myself? Is there any harm in the request?

ANNE No, sire.

K NG. Then you will go?

ANNE. I will be pleased to serve you, [*rising, taking his hand and kissing it, and bowing*] the king of France!

KING. Then you will take pleasure in honoring me in the way I request?

ANNE. As a true and virtuous subject I'll always obey the king.

KING. Nay, do not think I flatter, for what favor may I hope from you, who has for me not the slightest regard. No, I have no sweetened tongue to soothe the heart that

beats for another, since your heart is mistress of its choice; go to him for relief, whose passions so well commingle.

ANNE. No, I prefer the man that is n t pass·on's slave, and I will cherish him in my heart, ay! in my heart and soul!

KING. False woman, I hear too much of these false appeals; if by voice you fail to confess your guilt, do not your eyes, uneducated to deceit, as your tongue, betray the silent thoughts of your brain. Give heedful warning, for mine eyes reads your thoughts in your face

ANNE My heart, has not lost its first love. O, Lord, let not ever temptation enter this bosom; I may be weak, but not untrue. My tongue and soul shall ever be friends; break not seals nor vows.

KING. [*Departing*] Madame, you are about to receive a visit from the chancellor, who will make known to you certain commands with which I have charged him.

ANNE. But why his visit, sire? What can the chancellor have to say which your Majesty could not tell me?

[*Exit* KING.

That monster, custom, which all sense doth hate such an act, blurs all peace and happiness, and caused even a blush of modesty to mantle the hypocrite's face; it takes off the rose that shines from the fair brow of innocent love, sets at naught all finer feeling; makes marriage vows as false as a libertine's oath.

BEL. The Chancellor.

Enter the CHANCELLOR

CHAN. [*Smiling and bowing.*] Your Majesty.

ANNE. *Ri-ing haughtily.*] What do you want, sir; and for what do you come here?

CHAN. To make, madame, in the king's name, and without prejudice to the respect which I entertain for your Majesty, and exact examination of all your papers.

ANNE. What sir! an examination of my papers—of mine! Truly, it is a most disgraceful act!

CHAN. Deign to pardon me, madame; but in this affair

I am only an instrument which the king uses.

ANNE. Search, then sir. I am, it seems, a criminal. [*To her maid.*] Estefania, give up the keys. [*She does so; the chancellor searched the drawers.*]

CHAN. [*Turning to the queen.*] Now, I must make the principal search.

ANNE. [*Surprised.*] And what is that?

CHAN. His Majesty is certain that a letter was written by you during last night; and he knows that it has not been forwarded. This letter is not found in your table or desk, and yet it is somewhere.

ANNE. [*Chancellor advances*] Would you dare lay your hand upon your queen.

CHAN. I am a faithful servant of the king, madame, and everything that his Majesty may order, I shall perform.

ANNE. Well it is true, and the spies of the Cardinal served him faithfully. I have written a letter today, and that letter has not gone. It is here! [*Placing her hand upon her bosom.*]

CHAN. [*Stepping forward.*] Then give me the letter today, madame.

ANNE. I will give it to the king, only, sir,

CHAN. If his Majesty had wished the letter to be handed to him, madam, he would have demanded it himself.

ANNE. Well! what then?

CHAN. It is I whom he has ordered to take it.

ANNE. How?

CHAN. My orders go very far, madame; and I am authorized to seek for this suspected paper, even on the person of your Majesty.

ANNE. [*Throwing up her hands.*] Horrible! What do I see, righteous heaven? Can I believe my eyes? The king's chancellor is sent to examine my person for a private letter; my eyes are doubtless, two faithful witnesses; this is the most terrible of all my great humiliations! This blow completely overwhelms me! When suspicions

raged within me, it was heaven itself vaguely but ominously foretold me this horrible disgrace.

CHAN. Be more calm then, madame.

ANNE. This conduct is infamous in its violence. Are you not aware of that, sir?

CHAN. The king commands it! Therefore, madame, excuse me.

ANNE. I will not endure it. No! no! I will die rather. [*Reaching she draws the letter from her bosom.*] Here, sir, take the letter; take it, and free me from your odious presence.

CHAN. [*Bowing, receives the paper; opens it and reads:*] A letter to your brother, the Emperor of Austria, asking him to pretend offense at the policy of Richelieu, whose constant aim is to humble the house of Austria—to declare war against France, and lay down the dismissal of the Cardinal as a condition of peace. [*Closing the letter.*] The king thought the letter was to the Duke of Buckingham. I will take it to him to show his Majesty and the Cardinal they have accused you wrongfully. [*Bowing very low he retires.*]

[*Exit* CHANCELLOR.

ANNE. I am lost, lost! The Cardinal knows all, and he it is who is encouraging the king, who, as yet, is in ignorance, but who will soon be made acquainted with the fact of my disposition of the shoulder-knot. I am lost! irretrievably lost! My God! what shall I do! [*Kneeling down.*] Buckingham in England, Madame de Chevreuse in prison. I have been betrayed by one of the ladies of my court. La Porte watched and not permitted to depart from the Louvre. [*Weeping bitterly. A side door opens gently.*]

Enter the COUNTESS LANNOI.

COUN. Can I be of service to your Majesty?

ANNE. [*Surprised, turning quickly.*] Oh! it is you, Countess.

COUN. Your friend and slave.

ANNE. But I have been betrayed.

COUN. There is no time to talk of the past. It is of the immediate future.

ANNE. Yes, the immediate future. But, I thought it was you who betrayed me!

COUN. That matters not. I swear to you now that until the shoulder-knot is restored to you I will be your friend.

ANNE. You, madame, [*looking at the countess*] my friend!

COUN Yes, I. On my soul I pity you, and my pity induces me to swear friendship for you. Yes, there are traitors here; you are surrounded by them.

ANNE. Oh! my God my God! I am surrounded by traitors and spies.

COUN. The shoulder-knot! the shoulder-knot! Your Majesty, we must get it at once.

ANNE. Yes, but how can it be done?

COUN. Some one must be sent to the Duke.

ANNE. Folly! the ball is to be tomorrow night. Given soon, purposely to prevent reaching Buckingham.

COUN. I will find a messenger!

ANNE. Impossible. You cannot find a messenger that will travel as the wind.

COUN. Is it not possible to have it duplicated?

ANNE. If it was, Louis knows too well that I would have it done. No, that is not true, because he has guards at every door. I have no communication with the outside world. I am a prisoner.

COUN. What then?

ANNE. Nothing, but condemnation—divorce, or exile! More probably the latter.

COUN This is awful! If either shall happen, she who was a traitor to your friendship will suffer more than you. Oh, God, this is awful. [*Greatly excited, going about hurriedly.*] My reputation, my all, is at stake! You, [*seizing her hand*] if you are exiled we will go together. [*Aside*]

I am the cause of all this misfortune.

ANNE. I see nothing but sincerity in your eyes. I have seen them look otherwise.

Enter BELLARIO.

BEL. Your Highness! a card, [*opening it.*]

ANNE. Admit him.

Enter EMBASSY.

EMBASSY. Will your Royal Highness permit a word in private?

[*Exit* BELLARIO.

ANNE. Sure!

EMB. [*Drawing from beneath his cloak a package, reaching it to the queen.*] His Grace commissioned me to safely return to you the present you gave him in the garden of Amiens. Having done so, permit me to retire. [*Bowing low as he r*

ANNE. [*Surprised, taking it.*] You can retire. The shoulder-knot I gave Buckingham! [*Opening the casket.*] Returns the shoulder-knot I gave. Oh! a note. [*Reading it.*] "Your Majesty will excuse this hasty message and the return of the jewels you gave me. I attended a state ball a night this week in which I appeared with the shoulder-knot. I would confide to no one the care of this precious ornament. I was about to restore it to the casket, when I perceived the substraction of two of the tags. I at first supposed that I had been the victim of a common theft. An instant's reflection, however, convinced me that such was not the case, as I had upon my person jewels of greater value which it would have been equally easy to purloin, and these remained intact. A light broke upon me. I suspected the machinations of my old rival and enemy, the Cardinal-Duke. I immediately secured my jeweler, and he worked the remainder of the night and and all day, completing the number of the diamond tags. I forward to you by my confidential servant the jewels, hoping they will reach you before their absence from your collection may cause any misfortune to befall you. Ever yours, BUCKINGHAM."

ANNE. [*Excited with joy.*] I'm saved! Good Buckingham! How opportune was the receipt of the shoulder-knot! [*She conceals them.*]

Enter MARIE DE ROHAN, L.

ROHAN. I saw the king. His face is radiant with smiles. I'm so glad that you have pleased him.

ANNE. I always try to please his Majesty.

ROH. But if you fail to wear the shoulder-knot on the morrow night, he will be displeased.

ANNE. I never intimated to him that I would not.

ROH. [*Surprised.*] Oh? you can please him?

ANNE. Why not?

ROH. It was thought you gave the jewels to his Grace, Buckingham, your lover.

ANNE. [*Indignant.*] How dare you suggest that I, Anne of Austria have a lover?

ROH. Your Majesty would be excusable in having Buckingham as a lover, the handsomest man of the day.

ANNE. How dare you offend me? Season your thoughts ere you voice their expression.

ROH. Oh, you are romantic as the Duke is prodigal.

ANNE. [*In rage.*] I have no lover!

ROH. No, I am only telling you his intentions. If I were the queen of France, I'd accept his love. If he says he loves you, it fits your wisdom so far to believe it; he may give his saying warmth.

ANNE. You, chosen by his Majesty as my companion, now encourage me to become the lover of Buckingham. To you may be attributed the errors and misfortunes that have caused my estrangement from the king.

ROH. If with too willing ear you hear his love words, or your chaste heart submit to his unmastered passions, you may have soon to regret the sought opportunity.

ANNE. I fear no such weakness.

Enter COUNTESS LANNOI.

ROH. Her Majesty accused me of being the cause of her estrangement from the king.

COUN. It is easy to be estranged where the passion of love never existed.

ROH. Your Majesty should keep your affections within your control.

ANNE. But I love the king too dearly to unmask my heart to the moon.

COUN. Love the king less, and Buckingham more! His Grace is madly in love with you, and the king cares nothing for you. Virtue itself escapes not calumny; it penetrates cemented walls and iron gates.

ANNE. [*Prayerful attitude Aside*] Surrounded by court ladies maturer in years than I, influenced by their poisonous advice, and persecuted by the queen-mother and Richelieu, is it to be wondered that estrangement exists between the king and myself?

COUN. But I will be your friend, and advise you to beware; best safety lies in fear.

ANNE. I now know to my sorrow how greatly my levity has strengthened the hands of Marie de Medici, inflamed the jealousy of Richelieu, and injured my own cause in the public mind; and this at the moment when, deprived of the support of Madame de Chevreuse, I am less able than ever to contend against the increasing difficulties of my position.

COUN. Marie de Medici put forth all her talent for the intrigue; and while she pretends great anxiety to effect a reconciliation between you and the king, she is doing everything to injure you.

ANNE. You know?

COUN. She tells the king that you are guilty, but to place you in the same light that she was in at your age. Your position was similar to her own when the high spirits and thoughtlessness incident to youth had occasionally caused her to excite the suspicion and displeasure of her husband, Henry IV. I think it my duty to inform you of your danger.

ANNE. The effect of such a confession on the mind of

her son needs no comment.

COUN. Nor is it surprising that Louis is the more easily convinced of your guilt.

ANNE. As I live, 'tis true; but why didn't you—

[*Exeunt* ROHAN *and* LANNOI.

Enter BELLARIO.

BEL His Majesty returns.

KING. My beloved queen, I forgot to inform you that you are to enter the town-hall just as the clock in Notre-Dame strikes the hour of 10 o'clock.

ANNE. And I will try and look my best.

KING. [*Angry.*] If not in my eyes, it may have a pleasing effect in the eyes of other gentlemen of whom you have attachments.

ANNE. Jealous again. Yet, you encourage me to appear often, and you seemingly make especial effort that all the gay courtiers are introduced to me; then absent yourself, as though for a purpose

KING. Yes for a purpose; to permit you to enjoy yourself in a way that you do not with me.

ANNE. What do you mean?

KING. You associate with the courtiers.

ANNE. Yet, it is your choice that I do.

KING. I want to know your true character.

ANNE. How dare [*in rage*] you insinuate! you who have taken me as a child-wife, as a wild bird captured and now caged and brought through your machinations in contact with the most immoral men in Europe! I have formed platonic attachments, however, with no intention of doing wrong. [*Dropping on her knees taking his hands in an imploring way.*] But I am today pure as an angel and guilty of no sin.

Enter RICHELIEU.

RICH. A full confession is good for the soul!

ANNE. What do you mean? [*Rising quickly.*] You, Cardinal-Duke, my father in religion, but a licentious hypocrite in practice

RICH. Licentious hypocrite? do you say?

ANNE. Licentious hypocrite, I said! this is the first time you come into my private apartments when the king's here. On other occasions you walked in without the formality of an announcement Your garb of religious hypocrisy, that so lightly weighs on your shoulders is always used as an excuse; but ere you leave, his satanic majesty in some way appears. Thrice have I driven you from this room, as I would any other libertine. Do you deny it, good Cardinal?

RICH. [*Retiring.*] Because I failed to make a religious impression.

ANNE. Such a religious impression that if practiced would pave the way to hell. [*Standing, pointing at the retiring Cardinal.*]

[*Exit* RICHELIEU *to* L.

CURTAIN.

Act V.

SCENE I. *Reception room leading to the town hall ball room, Louis XIII and Richelieu discovered.*

KING. You feel that you have everything ready now to prove the queen's guilt?

RICH. Your Majesty has requested the queen to wear the shoulder-knot at this ball. She will appear without it. When you confront her with the accusation that she gave the diamonds to Buckingham, in self-respect she will be forced to deny the charge. You then must publicly accuse her, and call upon the Countess of Lannoi, who has charge of her jewels, and she will publicly proclaim that the queen gave them to Buckingham in the garden in Amiens. I will then step forward and submit two of the diamonds and explain to the public how I secured them.

Enter COUNTESS LANNOI.

KING. Have you instructed the Countess the part she is to take?

RICH. Yes, your Majesty.

COUN. All day she has been rehearsing with me, preparing for tonight's drama.

RICH. What will be your action when we prove her guilt?

KING. A divorce at once.

COUN. Good, your Majesty, and then marry some woman of your own country.

RICH. What did the queen say when you requested her to wear the diamonds tonight?

KING. [*Surprised; arising quickly.*] I gave her the order, but—

RICH. [*Anxious*] And what did she say?

KING. She replied simply and calmly that she would obey.

RICH. [*Excitedly.*] But she can't. [*Looking in the casket.*] I have two tags here. Was she agitated when you asked her to wear the shoulder-knot?

KING. Not in the least.

RICH. The invitation you sent Buckingham is signed by Anne of Austria?

KING. True. I want to deceive him into the belief that Anne of Austria was the sole cause of his invitation. To better enable him to make a clandestine meeting I shall give them full sway.

RICH. [*Rubbing his hands.*] Your Majesty is so wise! I could not do better myself.

KING. I have stopped all communication from the queen.

RICH. But may not Buckingham arrive earlier than expected?

KING. Impossible. He will not enter the city until the Notre-Dame clock is striking the hour of ten. At that very moment Anne of Austria will be entering this hall.

RICH. You have invited his Grace to come to the ball?

KING. Truly, he was in ship at Havre and I earnestly expressed my regrets that he did not have more timely notice, also informing him that it was an event that could not be postponed.

Ente. EARL *of* KINGSTON.

RICH. I am pleased to again meet you. [*extending his hand.*]

EARL. [*Bowing to the king.*] And your Majesty. Believe me, I am most happy to have had the pleasure while in your city to accept your invitation to this grand ball. Believe me your Majesty I became very interested in that little Chappie, [*laugning*] the equerry to her Majesty.

KING. Strange!

RICH. No not strange! [*Very grim*] Not strange where a fellow feeling exist.

EARL. What! is that I hear? A fellow feeling between an English Earl and a French equerry. Did you ever?

KING. You did not understand his Eminence.

EARL. I must have been mistaken. Oh! I am in hopes her Highness is enjoying good health.

KING. Excellent. She will enter the hall at ten o'clock.

EARL. It will make me happy to again see her.

[*Exit* EARL.

KING. That Earl is a fool. He will faint when I will kill his master.

RICH. Kill the Duke! Kill the prime minister of Charles I., while on a visit at your request! Think, sire, what a commotion! and then, what a horrible scandal. England would rightfully declare war immediately.

KING. But if the Duke is found under some disguise entering the palace?

RICH. That is a different thing. Then treat him as a thief, the despoiler of your domestic happiness.

KING. If he comes to the ball tonight I will publicly accuse him of stealing from me the queen's affections! and—

RICH. Stop Louis! He ought—

KING. Nothing but public retribution will suffice me.

RICH. Never, sire!

[*The distant striking of the cathedral clock proclaims the tenth stroke.*]

Enter whole Company.

BEL. The queen.

VOICES. The queen! Long live the queen!!

[*Music, a grand march, and every eye is at once turned toward the door. The queen enters on the arm of Duke Belliegrade, wearing a Spanish costume--a robe of green satin, curiously embroidered with gold and silver; having hanging sleeves, looped back with large rubies, serving as buttons. Her ruff is open and displays her bosom. Upon her head she wears a small cap of green velvet, surmounted by a heron's feather, while from her white shoulder depends gracefully the shoulder-knot with its twelve diamond tags.*]

[*The king approaches the queen.*]

KING. [*Taking her hand.* Madame, you deserve my love. Your brilliant appearance is a compliment both to myself and the magistrates. The shoulder-knot is beautiful.

ANNE. I must again congratulate your Majesty on your artistic taste and wise selection.

RICH. [*A pace behind the king, quivering with rage.*] I—[*aside*]—there must be two diamonds missing, for I have two in my hand. I shall yet triumph over this proud, insolent beauty. She may laugh my passion to scorn, and make me a mark for the ridicule of her associates, but she cannot get these diamonds.

COUN. [*Walking by the queen, counts the tags; she then walks to Richelieu in bathed voice.*] The diamonds are all

there.

KING. Madame I am pleased to see you look so beautiful. The diamond shoulder-knot shows elegantly.

ANNE. It makes me happy to know that your Majesty is pleased.

RICH. [*Approaching the king, gives him a small box.*] Take this, your Majesty.

KING. [*In ill temper.*] What does this mean?

RICH. Nothing, only count the diamonds in her Majesty's shoulder-knot. You will find but [*satanic smile*] ten. Ask her Majesty who have robbed her of these two.

KING. [*Again approaching the queen.*] I thank you, madame, for the deference you have paid to my wishes, but I believe you have lost two diamonds, and I bring them to you. [*Offering her the two diamonds.*]

ANNE. What sire, do you give me two more? why that will make me have fourteen.

KING. No, I but restore the two stolen diamonds.

ANNE. Stolen! I had no diamonds stolen. Who is your informant?

KING. Permit me to count. [*Counting.*] Sure, you have twelve. [*Cardinal approaches.*] What does this mean? [*Addressing the Cardinal.*]

RICH. It means, sire that I wished her Majesty to accept these diamonds.

ANNE. And I am the more grateful to your Eminence as I am certain that these two diamonds cost you more than the other twelve cost his Majesty. [*Low courtesy to the king and Cardinal; she retires.*]

RICH. [*Aside.*] I shall not be duped out of the belief that I have two of the diamonds.

Enter DONA; *she meets the* QUEEN.

[*The King walks to the Cardinal.*]

KING. Outwitted, Cardinal, outwitted!

RICH. If this is true, it will cost Buckingham's life.

DON. [*Aside to the Queen*] Beware! I overheard the king tell Richelieu that in your name the Duke of Buck-

ingham has been invited here to-night; that he will enter Paris the moment you entered this hall. He will be here within an hour.

ANNE. Great heavens! What does this mean? [*Queen standing on extreme* R]

DON. That you and his Grace shall be publically humiliated; and the Duke's body is to be run through by a sharp sword in the hands of the king.

ANNE. Whither have they taken him?

DON. To the Luxemburg.

ANNE. Then fly to the Duchess and tell her to go to his Grace and inform him of his danger, and direct her to bring Buckingham to the dark room in the Lovre at 2 o'clock in the morning and I will meet him. Be quick! Lose no time!

DON. But may I not ask the Earl of Kingston to accompany me?

ANNE. No, that fool would stop on the street corner to speak his wit to the first stranger he'd meet.

DON. But your Majesty, should I be arrested on the street, his Grace will lose his life.

ANNE. It's a case of life or death. Fly! [*Grasping Dona forcibly by the wrist*] Breathe not a word to a living soul the secret of your mission! Take this [*a ring from her finger and putting it on Dona's finger.*] This is the royal signet ring; present it to every guard you meet; all ways will be open to you, and all doors will stand ajar.

DON. I am capable of filling any secret trust confided to me by your highness.

ANNE. Hold! Bring the Earl of Kingston to me.

Enter EARL OF KINGSTON *and* MADAM DE ROHAN. L.

ROH. You are not the only Englishman who is in love with our beautiful Queen.

EARL. I never had an opportunity to say anything particularly nice to her Majesty. Because that Chappie Bellaris was always been watching me. [*The Queen remainsstanding, holding Dona by by the wrist, looking over her*

shoulder at the Earl and Rohan as they enter.]

EARL. The hidden feelings of my heart are regulated by choice.

ROH. And that choice?

EARL. Anne of Austria!

ROH. If aught but merit could gain her heart, the man is yet to be named.

EARL. But these chains, matrimonial chains—

ROH. Hush! Not so loud. The King is near.

EARL. I never court obscurity in things which require light. My mind soars too high to conceal my feelings when my heart asks to declare them.

[*Exit* ROHAN.

DONA. [*To the Earl, placing her hand on his arm.*] Seal your lips, be not startled at what I will tell you!

EARL. What, seal the lips of a jester?

DONA. Thus far you have played the part of a fool well. But now is the time for duty.

EARL. Well, madame, what will you have me do?

DON. [*In low voice.*] Solve a great problem.

EARL. [*Laughing.*] A great problem. Better you give it to the great clock in Notre-Dame and let the hands work it out.

DON. Sir, you are a fool. No time is to be lost; come, and her Royal Highness will tell you what she will have you do.

[*The Earl and Dona walks to the queen.*

EARL. [*Courtesying.*] I am subject to your Majesty's command.

[*Dona retires.*

ANNE. Manifest no surprise at what I am going to relate. Nerve yourself. I have just been informed that the Duke of Buckingham is to be murdered in this hall to-night by the king of France!

EARL. Heavens!

ANNE. Place smiles on your face. Did I not command you!

EARL What will I do to save him?

ANNE Dona has instructions. Return and talk to Madame de Rohan, on the same line of conversation you were engaged. When Dona quits the room follow her. If you can find an early opportunity go and she will follow. In any event, you must be gone in ten minutes.

EARL. I will return to Madame de Rohan.

[*Dona returns to the queen.*]

DON. Most gracious Earl, meet me in the rear of the hall at once. Once in the street, we will fly as the winds!

[*Exeunt.*

ROH Your love for her Majesty has moved my sympathy for you; I see an excess of love in all your actions and your malady deserves to be pitied.

EARL. Since I am not accountable for my faults, some indulgence ought to be allowed me. You will then convey to the queen my desires?

ROH. I will. But here comes the queen.

[*Exit* EARL.

ANNE. [*Aside.*] I must find an excuse to return to the palace. I have it. I will at first opportunity do the womanly act, faint, and in my swoon ask to be carried back to the palace.

COUN. Your Majesty, did I hear you say you wanted to return to the palace?

ANNE. I did say so, I am not feeling well.

Enter the KING.

KING. I perceive, madame, that my coming is somewhat unseasonable and disturbs your conversation. [*Extending her hand to the king.*] I must needs say I did not expect to find you feeling so ill. It is possible you expected to see some one you have not yet seen.

ANNE. Such a suspicion is folly! Harbor no such thoughts. Sire, my trouble is different. I feel a swimming in my head, the room is becoming dark, catch me

for I am going to fall. [*She faints. She falls into the arms of the Countess.*]

CURTAIN.

Act VI.

SCENE II. *Small, dark room; double curtains in rear of room. A table, on which is a small night lamp.*

[*Enter the Duke of Buckingham and the Duchess de Chevreuse. The Duke is dressed as a French musketeer. The Duchess is in the costume of a French peasant woman, with a dark shawl on her head.*]

DUCH. Remain here, my Lord Duke; some one will come immediately.

[*Exit* DUCHESS.

BUC. [*Approaching a mirror.*] The dress of a musketeer becomes me wonderfully. Alone in a small room in a great palace, I don't know whether I am above or below ground. I know that when once inside the court, the Duchess kept by the [*brushing his hair*] side of a wall for about twenty paces; at the end of the hall she tried a small private door. The door opened, and we entered and found ourselves in total darkness; but she seemed well acquainted with all the turnings and twistings of this part of the Louvre, which she said is appropriated to the royal suite. She shut all the doors behind us, taking me by the hand and leading me as she would a child. George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, has been accustomed to lead the ladies by the hand. [*His hand to his forehead.*] I believe we ascended a stair on tip-toe; two flights of stairs; we then turned to the left, went through a long corridor, descended another stair, walked a few steps forward, introduced a key into a lock, opened the door, and here I am. [*Low laugh.*] It is impossible for me to escape. I could not find my way out if I had a lamp; but the d ors are all locked and I have no keys. The Duchess informs me that

the pretended message of Anne of Austria, on the faith of which I came from my ship is a snare, set by Richelieu and the king; and I am not sure but the bringing of me into this room is another snare. [*Drawing his sword.*] I swear that I can kill all that comes, let it be who it may. Yes, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, may die right here. I now believe I shall, because if Anne of Austria has sent for me to meet her here she would have kept her word.

[*The curtain opens; he sees the queen's reflection in the glass turning quickly.*]

Enter Anne of Austria in a simple robe of white satin, accompanied by the Countess of Lannoi.

ANNE. Anne of Austria always keeps her word. [*Advances two steps.*]

BUC. [*The Duke advances, sinks on one knee, and kisses the hem of her robe.*] Your majesty!

ANNE. My lord, you already know that it was not I that sent for you.

BUC. Yes, I know it. I know it because—yes, because your Majesty so informs me! I know that I have been a fool, a madman, to believe that it rains when the mercury is below zero, that marble statues speak when spoken to, but what do you expect? That I should not come, when I receive a letter signed by Anne of Austria, having affixed thereto the seal of the royal court? Would you have me believe that my journey has been in vain, since I have met you?

ANNE. Yes, but you know why, and how, I see you. I see you out of compassion to yourself; I see you because, insensible to all my distress, you persist in seeing me. Believe me, you have not been invited here for any good purpose; in a city where, by remaining, you risk your own life and my honor. I see you to tell you that everything separates us—the depths of the sea, the enmity of nations, the sanctity of oaths. It is sacrilege to struggle against

such things. And, lastly, I see you to tell you that I must never see you more.

BUC. The softness of your voice repays the sternness of your words. You speak of sacrilege; but the sacrilege is in the separation of hearts, which God has formed for one another.

ANNE. You forget that I never said I loved you.

BUC. [*On one knee.*] But neither have you said that you did not love me; and indeed to say so would be a proof of the greatest ingratitude on the part of your Majesty. Would you destroy a love which neither time nor absence can overcome? I have loved you as no one can tell since I first saw you. With closed eyes I can see you as I saw you the first time; seated in Spanish manner, upon cushions, wearing a dress of green satin, embroidered in silver and in gold with falling sleeves fastened around your beautiful arms by large rubies used as buttons. You also wore a close ruff, and a small hat, of the same color as your dress and adorned with a heron's plume, upon your head. Oh! thus, thus, with closed eyes do I behold you as you then were; and I open my eyes again, only to see you now, a hundred times more lovely!

ANNE. What folly, to nourish so useless a passion on such memories as these!

BUC. Alas! what would your Majesty expect? I have nothing but these memories; they are my happiness, my treasures, and my hope. Each time that I behold you, is a new jewel that I enshrine within the casket of my heart. This is the sixth of such jewels that you have let fall and that I have eagerly secured. Yes, your Majesty, I have seen you only six times; the first I have recalled to you; the second when I appeared as a monk; the third was at Madame de Chevreuse's; the fourth was in the garden of Amiens; the fifth when I appeared as the White Lady.

ANNE. Kindly do not refer to the garden of Amiens

BUC. Oh! rather let me dwell upon it, for it is the one beaming, blissful night of my existence! Does your Maj-

esty remember how lovely a night it was? The air was laden with sweetness, and the blue sky was studded with innumerable stars. Ah! Madame, I was alone with you for an instant then and you were about to make me the confidante of your griefs—of the isolation of your life, and the deep sorrows of your heart. You were leaning on my arm—on this one, madame, and, when I leant my head toward you, I felt my cheek gently touched by your beautiful hair; I trembled through every vein. Oh! your Majesty! you know not the bliss which I experienced in that moment. Fortune, glory, life, gladly would I give them all for another interview like that on such a night; for I will swear that then, at least that night, you loved me.

ANNE. It is possible that the influence of the place, the charm of that enchanting evening, the fascination of your looks, and the thousand circumstances which sometimes occur in leading a woman onward to her ruin, may have grouped themselves around me on that fatal night; but you are not ignorant, my lord, that I gave succor to the weakness of the woman, and that at the first word that you presumed to say, at the first freedom that you dared take, I summoned others to my presence!

BUC. It is but too true, and any feebler love than mine would never have survived the test; but my love came from it more ardent, and more immortal. You thought to escape from me by returning to Paris. In one week, I was on my return here. On that occasion you had nothing to complain of. I had risked favor and life to see you for a single second; I did not even touch your hand, and you forgave me when you found I was submissive and repentant.

ANNE. But you are well aware that calumny fastened upon even those follies in which I had no small share. Prompted by the Cardinal, the king's resentment was extreme. Madame de Vernay was dismissed; Bellario was banished; and Madame de Chevreuse was disgraced by imprisonment.

BUC. If I cannot see you again, I will take care that you shall continually hear of me. I am well enough aware that I have no chance of reaching Paris at the head of an army; but then, this war must bring about peace; peace will require negotiations; and these negotiations shall be made by none but me. I shall return to Paris, and behold you once again, and be, for an instant, happy. It is but too true that my enjoyment will have been bought by the blood of thousands of mankind; but what will their lives be to me, provided that my eyes are blest once more by seeing you! This may be folly—perhaps madness; but tell me pray, had ever woman more impassioned lover, had ever a queen a more enthusiastic servant?

ANNE. The witnesses you call for your defense accuse me. These very proofs, that you would give me of your love, are themselves almost crimes!

BUC. But only because you do not love me. You spoke, madame, of Madame de Chevreuse; but, oh! how much less cruel was that lady than you are! Lord Holland loved her, and she smiled upon his love.

ANNE. Madame de Chevreuse is not a queen.

BUC. And would you, then, love me if you were not a queen? Oh! tell me, madame! say that you would love me! Let me believe that it is but the dignity of your rank that has made you thus merciless to me! Let me believe that if you had been Madame de Chevreuse there might have been hope for the unhappy Buckingham!! Oh! charming queen! thanks for the sweet words, a thousand thanks!

ANNE. You misunderstood me; I did not mean to say—

BUC. Hush! be not so cruel as to correct an error that is so full of happiness to me!

ANNE. Oh, God!

BUC. I did not tell you this to alarm your Majesty. But the words which you have just uttered, the hope which you almost gave me, would be a recompense for every-

thing, even for life.

ANNE. I dreamed that I saw you stretched upon the earth, all bloody from a wound.

BUC. On the left side, and inflicted by a knife, was it not?

ANNE. Yes, it was on the left side, and by a knife. But who could have told you of my dream? I had such a dream. I have never spoken of it but in my prayers to God.

BUC. I would not covet more. And you love me! you love me!

ANNE. I, love you?

BUC. Yes, you! Would God send to you the same dreams as to me, if you did not love me? Should we be visited by the same presentiments if our two existences were not united by the same heart?

ANNE. Oh, my God! this is more than I can bear! In the name of heaven, withdraw! I know not whether I love you or not; but this I know, that I will break my vow. Oh! if you should be wounded in France—if you should die in France—if I could imagine that your love for me had caused your death, I should never be consoled. The thought maddens me! Depart, then; depart, I beseech you.

BUC. Oh! how beautiful you are now! I love you.

ANNE. Depart, I implore you, and return hereafter. Come back as an ambassador; as a minister, come back, surrounded by your guards who will defend you, and your servants who will watch you, and then I shall have no fear for your life, and I shall have some happiness in seeing you.

BUC. Oh, but is it really true, what you now tell me?

ANNE. Yes.

BUC. Your hand, and I leave you.

ANNE [*Closing her eyes, leaning on the Countess Lannoi, she extends her hand.*]

BUC. [*Buckingham passionately kisses her hand, and then arises.*] Before six months have passed, if I be not dead, I will see you again, if I must disturb the world to accomplish it.

ANNE. No, never! Duty predominates over love!

Enter the DUCHESS DE CHEVREUSE.

DUCH. Come, your Grace, quick! we have but a moment to escape from the palace.

[*Exeunt the* DUKE *and the* DUCHESS *hand in hand.*

[*Anne of Austria maintains her rigid position, with closed eyes, leaning on the Countess Lannoi.*]

CURTAIN.

L of C.

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